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THE BENEDICTINES

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The Benedictines

By DOM BRUNO DESTRÉE

Translated by a Benedictine of Princethorpe Priory, Warwickshire. *With a Preface by* DOM BEDE CAMM, O.S.B., M.A., F.S.A.

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PREFACE

I HAVE been asked by the translator of this work to revise it and bring the statistics up to date; and it seems that a few words of explanation may be useful.

The author, who, to the sorrow of his brethren and many friends, died a premature death in 1919, was a convert from unbelief, and was brother to the well-known Socialist leader in Belgium.

Dom Destrée had necessarily taken his statistics of the various Benedictine monasteries and congregations from the official *Album Benedictinum* of 1910. Another issue of this work, the latest up to date, appeared after his death, in 1920. The ten intervening years, marked as they were by the European War and all the disasters that followed in its train, had necessarily witnessed many changes, and it seemed therefore important to correct the author's chapters that deal with Benedictinism of the present time, in conformity with the new statistics that appeared after his death.

One important change, for instance, is the founding of a new Belgian Congregation, which includes the Abbey to which Dom Destrée himself belonged. The number, both of monasteries and of monks, has also largely increased since 1910; and it would be misleading to quote the statistics of an earlier date when later ones are to hand.

The necessary changes have, therefore, been made by the present writer, with the kind permission of the owner of the copyright of the original book, Dom Robert de Kerchove, Abbot of Louvain.

With the same authority, various corrections and additions have been made to the text, where it seemed desirable or necessary.

But these changes are insignificant, and the translator has aimed at rendering into English, as faithfully as possible, Dom Destrée's French text.

It is hoped that this concise summary of Benedictine history and polity will be found useful to many readers, both in this country and on the other side of the Atlantic; for such a work has long been looked for.

The translator completed her task in 1914, but the war and the upheavals that followed it have interfered to prevent its publication. It is now at last brought out in the hope that it will be as welcome in English-speaking countries as the original has proved to be in France and Belgium.

DOM BEDE CAMM.

Downside Abbey,
1922.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

A BENEDICTINE monastery is usually set in some pleasant spot. Its inmates being tied to one locality for life, naturally seek a situation that shall be picturesque as well as favourable to prayer and contemplation. The consequent natural advantages attract crowds of visitors, who, while making the round of church, cloister, library and range of offices thrown open to public inspection, call in question the wisdom of this solitary, silent and disciplined life, and find difficulty in adjusting the well-equipped library to the paramount claims of prayer, and reconciling the ornate church with the vow of poverty. They quiz and criticise all they see, for the simple reason that they do not possess the key to monastic life, but judge from appearances and from prejudice.

Without stopping to reply to stock objections[1] or the idle chatter of sightseers, we propose to deal with queries prompted by genuine interest, with a view to fostering a genuine knowledge and love of the Benedictine Order. These queries may be conveniently grouped under three heads:

1. What is the idea and scope of the Benedictine Order ?
2. What has it accomplished in the past ?
3. What is its mission and standing in the Church of to-day ?

[1] These have been refuted a hundred times, and very persuasively, in a small volume published under the title of *The Contemplative Life*, by a Carthusian monk (London: Burns Oates and Washbourne).

Our work is addressed primarily to outsiders desirous of further information about Benedictine life. It has also its message for monks, as it is hoped that a concise picture of the providential mission of the Order, of its past services and its present-day activities, may deepen their appreciation of their holy vocation.

Lastly, by bringing home to the sons of St. Benedict the manifold achievements of their Order in the world of to-day, we aspire to promote their solidarity under varying conditions of climate and differences of observance, so that all may combine to realise and manifest, in unity of spirit and diversity of operation, the ideal of life conceived by St. Benedict.

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THE BENEDICTINES

I

THE BENEDICTINE LIFE[1]

CHAPTER I

DIFFERENT RELIGIOUS ORDERS

IN the comparison that St. Paul draws between the human body and Christ's mystic body he makes use of a similitude to which he frequently recurs, as it gives him a most convincing argument for the practice of mutual charity, a virtue he would have all Christians exercise. He shows clearly that, as in the human body multiplicity of members and diversity of operations are no obstacle to its unity, neither should it be to the unity of the mystical body. To the Corinthians he writes:[2] " For as the body is one and hath many members, and all the members of the body,

[1] On the aim and principles of the Benedictine life cf. Guéranger, *Notions sur la vie religieuse et monastique;* Freppel, *Discours sur l'ordre monastique;* Maur. Wolter, *Præcipua Ordinis Monastici elementa;* Sauter Ben., *Kolloquien über die heilige Regel;* Gasquet, *The Rule of St. Benedict;* Doyle, *The Teaching of St. Benedict;* Besse, *Le Moine Bénédictin;* D'Huillier, *Explication de la Règle de St. Benoît;* v. Oer, *Ein Tag im Kloster;* and the English adaptation of the same: *A day in the Cloister,* by B. Camm; Jean de Hemptinne, *Notice sur l'ordre de St. Benoît;* Maredsous and St. André. For this first part, and especially for all that deals with the analogies between the Church and the Benedictine Order, as well as for the comparison between the different forms of religious life, we have availed ourselves chiefly of the notes taken at the conferences given to the students of Louvain by the present abbot of Maredsous, Columba Marmion, when he was prior of Mont César.

[2] Cor. xii. 12-13.

whereas they are many, yet are one body; so also in Christ. For in one spirit were we all baptised into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether bond or free." And coming back to his idea, but adding a word on the diversity of spiritual gifts and graces, he writes to the Romans:[1] " For as in one body we have many members, but all the members have not the same office; so we being many are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another, and we have different gifts according to the grace that is given us."

Again it is the same doctrine that the Apostle preaches to the Ephesians to exhort them to remain united in faith: " To each one of us is given grace according to the measure of the giving of Christ; who has given to some to be apostles, to others to be prophets, to others to be pastors and doctors, so that thus in the edifying of the body of Christ all the faithful may sanctify themselves in the ministry which has been entrusted to them."[2]

From the first beginnings of the Church there were in it, by the will of its Divine Founder, different ministries and vocations. Were we to watch painters copying the same model, we should see them reproduce it under different aspects; so is it with souls aspiring to perfection. Christ is the ideal of all, but they strive to attain it by the reproduction of that virtue or aspect of the Master's life which most appeals to them by reason of their natural bent.

In the evolution of monasticism it appears that what souls have thus tried, individually at first, becomes, in course of time, the root idea of entire religious Orders, grouping men together and imposing the restraints of vows and rules, so that they may more surely attain their end. The same Spirit who breathed in the bosom of the Church individual vocations, also raised up in the Church religious Orders, according as circumstances and the needs of the

[1] Rom. xii. 4, 5, 6. [2] Eph. iv. 7, 11, 12.

Church required some particular virtue of our Saviour to be brought home to the world and reaffirmed by the convincing argument of example.

" The religious of the Church do for Christ on earth what the angels do for God in heaven,"[1] observes the founder of St. Sulpice, Monsieur Olier. That each religious Order has a particular virtue of Christ to honour is the teaching of St. Thomas.

CHAPTER II

THE BENEDICTINE IDEAL

The comparison drawn out in the treatise on religious Orders is worth considering, because it brings out the fact that the beauty and sanctity of the Church result in a great measure from this permanent reproduction of the different virtues of Christ by the various religious Orders. We use it advisedly in order to promote the mutual love and reverence that should subsist between them in view of the " edification of the body of Christ," the task in which all compete without distinction. But, in any desire to exalt the beauty of the Benedictine vocation, there is not the least intention of casting a slight on other Orders approved by the Church. We can cordially say with St. Bernard: " We belong to one by profession, to all by charity," but the preference we naturally give to the Order of our choice should never cause us to overlook or belittle the merits of others.

It seems then to be unquestionable that the different Orders approved by the Church have been providentially decreed and created by God to renew and to manifest continuously to the world the fulness of the virtue united in

[1] *Traité des Saints Ordres*, ch. 6, p. 524 ff.

Jesus Christ. By general consent, poverty is assigned to the Franciscans, defence of the truth to the Preaching Friars, solitude to the Carthusians, prayer to the Carmelites and other strictly contemplative Orders, charity to the Congregations devoted to corporal and spiritual works of mercy. But wherein does the Benedictine specialise? What virtue is he set to enforce?

M. Olier may be again quoted with advantage. The reference gains in interest in view of his unbroken intimacy with two of the most enlightened Benedictines of his time.[1] Now, in his writings on the Order, he frequently and emphatically refers to its appointed mission "of maintaining and renewing continuously in the Church the spirit of religion."

What St. Thomas teaches with reference to the virtue of religion is relevant here, for it throws light on this essential characteristic and on the consequences we would deduce for the purpose of defining the end of the Order. "One may," he says, "regard the virtue of religion in either of two ways; first, in its technical signification as a moral virtue prescribing the acts proper to worship, such as adoration, prayer, and sacrifice," and in this sense, although especially applicable to Benedictines, it is more or less common to all religious Orders. But it has a higher and deeper significance when it is regarded as the master-virtue controlling all the others, regulating human activities, and centralising the whole life in God.[2]

So understood, the virtue of religion was the root-virtue of Christ. It determined all His actions. It inspired Him, at His entrance into the world, to offer Himself a victim to

[1] Hugues Bataille and Grégoire Jarisse, Benedictines of St. Germain, revealed to him his mission as the founder of St. Sulpice and reformer of the clergy (cf. Faillon, *Vie de M. Olier*, tome iii).

[2] *S. Th.*, 2, 2, q. 81, art. 1 ad 1 and art. 8 ad 1.

His Father in place of the empty sacrifices of the Old Law, by the surrender of His entire self to the Divine behests. It is also under the inspiration of this virtue that the Benedictine, on the day of his profession, offers himself in sacrifice. When, at the offertory of the Mass, he lays upon the altar the deed of his oblation he protests that his offering united to that of the Eucharistic Victim becomes from that moment final and irrevocable. To live for God, to seek Him in and above all, this is absolutely essential to the Benedictine life. Long before the act which completes and crowns his monastic training, the postulant, on entering the monastery, is met, as St. Benedict directs, by the inquiry *Si revera Deum quærit*—if in truth he comes to seek God. This condition is vital, and nothing else can take its place. From the very fact that the monk, when once professed, must be penetrated with the spirit which impelled his Divine Model to seek at every moment and in every action the will and glory of his Father, it is evident that the Benedictine aim cannot be the manifestation of any one particular aspect, but rather that of the whole trend of the life of Christ as controlled and guided by the motive of religion. During the course of His public life our Lord said: "That which pleases My Father I do always,"[1] and the principle of His every act, from His Incarnation onwards, was invariably the will of His Father.

So should it be with the Benedictine. He should keep his eyes ever fixed on God and on the Church, the index to him of the Divine Will. And this spirit of religion, which should be to him as it was to Christ a lamp warming and lighting all his life, *is kept alive by one permanent work—the Divine Office*. "To it," as St. Benedict declares, "nothing may be preferred."[2] And, so far from interfering with other activities required by the Church's needs, it

[1] John viii. 29. [2] *Reg.*, c. xliii.

gives, on the contrary, a spiritual character to everything it touches.

In contrast to other Orders and modern Congregations, which, inspired by the Spirit of God, tend to perfection by the imitation of some particular virtue or aspect of the life of our Lord, the Benedictine undertakes no special work as his exclusive aim, even as he excludes none which is compatible with the common life and the liturgy. He consecrates his whole being to God in the general practice of Christianity and in an adaptability to take up any work of which the Church, by stress of time or circumstance, may stand in need. This he has done in the past, as our summary of Benedictine history shows;[1] this he is doing to-day, as will be attested by our catalogue of the activities of the Order at the present time.[2] But always and above all, in order that its character as an Order pre-eminently "religious" may be preserved, whenever a Benedictine monastery is founded, it sets itself primarily to procure the glory of God by means of the Divine Office, and then to group round this central work such labours as are necessary for the development of the Church in the locality.

CHAPTER III

BENEDICTINE AIMS AND ACTIVITIES

This conception of the monk as primarily a man of God and, in consequence, a man of the Church and of the Church of Rome, has found an able exponent in Mgr. Freppel, from whose discourse on monasticism an important passage may here be quoted, because, of all the tributes ever paid to our Order, not one more accurately gauges and delineates its spirit and purpose or the scope of its activities.

[1] Cf. II. [2] Cf. III.

" For the very reason that a monk is a man of Divine praise," says Mgr. Freppel, " he is knitted more closely than anyone else to Him to whom the praise is rendered and by whom it is received. Hence it follows that he is, in the fullest acceptance of the term, *the man of God and the man of the Church*. For to pray with the Church is to be identified with her, to be penetrated with her spirit, and to live her life. From the hour that the monk becomes detached from every other preoccupation save that of praising God and getting Him praised, he becomes a fit instrument for every good work.

" The interests and needs of the Church are his; he knows no other. The Church is the place of his activity; he is ever ready at hand to execute all she wishes or requires. He prays, he studies, he works but for her interests. In proportion as he frees himself from earthly shackles, and raises himself above common passion, he brings to her service more clear-sightedness of judgment, more energy of action, more self-sacrificing ardour. Not that he begins to assume any particular rôle or claims any particular mission; he is content to be in God's hand, projecting nothing, prepared for everything. If the Church has no need for his devotedness he remains in obscurity, serving her better, perhaps, by prayer than by speech or action. If she invokes the aid of his learning or his genius, he stands at attention with loins girt and lamp burning, until she addresses to him the words written by Urban II. to a son of St. Benedict: ' Come up here to us, Anselm, and help us to do battle for your Mother and ours; help us.' Summoned or passed over, these men of solitude, steeped in prayer, inured to vigils, bathed in the light of Divine grace, form by turns a picked vanguard and a select reserve in the army of Christ. When the moment comes and the Spirit of God, breaking into the quiet of their solitude, urges them forth into the arena of life, they hasten

at the first summons to report themselves to the Church, with the words: *Adsumus*—' Here we are.'

" Such is the ideal monk—a man of the Church as well as a man of God. Then is it surprising," continues the Bishop of Angers, " that monachism has exerted so marked an influence on the history of Christianity ? Its world-wide and age-long association in the labours of the Church has necessarily produced a race of workers incomparable in speech and action.

" Has she need of apostles to reclaim peoples from barbarism and subject them to the yoke of Christ, monasteries despatch their legions as missionaries: Augustine with forty companions leaves for England; Boniface sets out for Germany, Anschar for Scandinavia, and Adalbert goes to the Slavs.

" Does she, after imparting the gift of faith, take thought of the body, and seek to promote the temporal welfare of her children and provide for their material needs ? Throughout the length and breadth of Europe the sons of Benedict rise in answer to her call, and go forth with pickaxe and spade to till a soil hitherto barren and unreclaimed.

" Does she, combining her solicitude for the deposit of faith with an interest in the treasures of knowledge, determine to save from oblivion the monuments of human learning ? It is to the monks she entrusts the task. With the same resolute energy they brought to the tilling of the soil they copy and recopy manuscripts, to save for a generation yet unborn the priceless heritage of the past. Thus, each monastery becomes a centre of literature, and rays of learning stream forth from innumerable centres of light, such as Fulda, Bec, the Lateran, Corbie and Canterbury.

" Does she meditate the project of reconstructing society on the everlasting basis of Christian civilisation ? By a strange paradox, it is among these men of solitude, vowed to prayer and contemplation, thinking only of heaven and

sanctity, that she finds her ablest rulers and most far-sighted statesmen. To-day they are dwelling in the midst of their brethren, chanting with them the praises of the Lord, indifferent to all besides. To-morrow they are sitting in the Chair of Peter, are holding the headship of Churches, are privy to the councils of kings, astounding the world by their clearness of vision and by the promptitude and energy of their decisions.

"We find a Gregory the Great quitting his cell to embrace a universe in a vigilance which knew neither truce nor limit. We read of a Ségur passing from the cloister to take over the government of the first realm of Christendom; or a Gregory VII going forth to stem an invasion worse than barbaric, of despotism and decay of morals. And when I speak of the restoration of discipline and moral influence over the masses I am impelled to conjure up before you those grand figures of Cluny, the undying glory of monasticism: Odo, Majolus, Odilo, Hugh, that band of saintly men who at one epoch drew a cordon of monasteries from Iceland to Palestine, from Spain to Russia, linking them together in one spirit and in the pursuit of a common purpose: the triumph of Jesus Christ in the Church and by the Church."[1]

CHAPTER IV

THE BENEDICTINE LIFE IS TYPICAL

This rapid survey made by the learned bishop of the part played by monasticism in the Middle Ages bears out his theory that the Benedictine, steeped in the spirit, the mind

[1] *Sermon on the Monastic Order*, preached on March 16, 1876, at Solesmes for the anniversary of the obsequies of Dom Guéranger. We have omitted in this last paragraph a number and a statement relative to Cluny which we believe to be incorrect, so that the evidence of so great an authority may not be open to criticism.

and the desires of the Church, has been, if not the chief actor, at any rate her chief helpmate in all the mighty works she has accomplished. How could it be otherwise ? For not only by its fidelity in handing on, as the foremost duty, the official prayer of the Church, but, as we shall see, by its very constitution, mode of government and organisation, *the Order is joined more closely than any other to the Church*. In fact, it is in a way identified with her, and *its life is simply the Church's life defined by special duties and obligations*. In proof of this we appeal to the Church's definition and to the essential features of her life as seen in her constitution, worship, ethics and ascetics.

The Church, according to the simple definition of the Catechism, is the society of the faithful professing the doctrine of Jesus Christ, under one head. Jesus Christ, the supreme and invisible head of the faithful, is represented among them by the Sovereign Pontiff, His vicar, whom He appoints His substitute, and invests with the twofold power of teaching and governing in His name. The Pope is, then, in the beautiful language of St. Catherine of Siena, " Christ on earth," the visible head of the Church.

Now, all the constituents which make up this concept of the Church reappear in the Benedictine organisation.

Like the Church, the Benedictine Society is a society of some of the faithful, professing the doctrine of Jesus Christ, and having the like aim of leading men back to God by union with the merits and obedience of Jesus Christ.

The whole Divine plan for the redemption of the world is summarised by St. Paul in his epistle to the Romans: " For as by the disobedience of one man many were made sinners: so also, by the obedience of one, many shall be made just."[1] The entire human race having wandered from

[1] Rom. v. 19.

God by the primal disobedience of the first Adam, then having deepened its guilt by its own actual sins, the plan of Divine Wisdom was "to renew all things in Christ,"[1] as says the Apostle. It was this same plan which Pope Pius X took as the motto and guiding principle of his pontificate, and made the leading thought of his first Encyclical.[2] This plan determines the Church's end, and on it St. Benedict also modelled his Rule and set up his "School of Divine service." Indeed, the aim of all his teaching to those who "enlist under Christ, the King," is, as he declares in the Prologue to his Rule, "to bring them back by the labour of obedience to Him from whom they had departed by the sloth of disobedience."[3]

Granted, then, that the Benedictine Society has the same end and aim as the Church, will the analogy hold good in the governing authority of both societies? The Pope is the representative of Jesus Christ in the Church. He, for her, is the Christ on earth. In terms almost identical St. Benedict speaks of the office of an abbot set over a Benedictine community: "He is considered," he says, "to take the place of Christ in the monastery."[4]

In the Church, all power emanates from the Sovereign Pontiff, and to him the hierarchy is subject. In the monastery, all the offices which the abbot cannot discharge in person are committed by him to subordinates, without prejudice to his own authority.

The analogy reappears in the Constitution of both societies and their mode of government. When founding the Church, our Lord first chose the head, around whom he grouped the college of the twelve Apostles. In the erection

[1] Eph. i. 10.

[2] Encycl. *E supremi: Unde si qui symbolum nobis expetant, quod voluntatem animi patefaciat, hoc unum dabimus semper: Instaurare omnia in Christo.*

[3] *Regula Sti, Benedicti*, Prol.

[4] *Reg.*, c. ii.

of a Benedictine abbey, the first proceeding is to fix upon an abbot, and to settle him for life over a community which, in St. Benedict's opinion, requires a complement of at least twelve members.

Again, the Pope is surrounded by the college of cardinals; and a bishop is assisted in the government of his diocese by a chapter of canons. So, in the monastery, the abbot takes the "seniors" into counsel; but, like Pope and bishop, he is free to set aside the advice of his councillors, whose functions are merely consultative.

Finally, an analogy exists in the mode of teaching and doctrine. The doctrine of our Lord is contained in Holy Writ; yet conjointly with this sacred deposit the Church has received the commission to interpret it through the lips of the Sovereign Pontiff, and to draw therefrom whatever inferences and applications may be necessary for the times; in a word, to represent the living voice of Christ. In a monastery, too, beside the doctrine of St. Benedict embodied in the Holy Rule, there is the daily teaching of the abbot as its authentic and practical interpretation.

From these multiple analogies it is clear that the monastery as conceived by St. Benedict is really nothing else than a reproduction of the Church on a small scale. If the Church is, according to the Council of Trent, the assembly of the faithful, is not the monastery a family of the faithful, living under a visible head who is also the father, and striving for the perfection of the social ideal of Christianity? Its constitution, aim, and way of life have been cast by St. Benedict in the mould of the Church. Anyone who comprehends this scheme of life and reflects on the vast number of Saints it has produced must realise that those who live in such intimacy with the Church are living lives which lead straight to God. Did not Pius X, in the early days of his pontificate, remind us that we can

only make sure of reaching God through Christ, and Christ by the Church ?[1]

Benedictine life is, then, the Christian life, but, as we have said, the Christian life defined by special duties and obligations. The monk aims at being a perfect Christian. In practice, Christianity means the complete submission of man to God. Hence, the obedience of the monk must go farther than that of the ordinary Christian. For such, the Church is content to mark out the broad lines of Christian life. In the family circle of perfect Christians which an abbey should be, the abbot's authority determines the smallest details of daily life. Food, bedding, clothing, work, reading, and everything else that goes to make up the monk's life are under his control. This right is not only given him by the Rule, but the monks desire to see him exercise it, knowing, as St. Benedict says, " the worth of obedience," and that " it is by this path of obedience that we go unto God."[2]

As in submission the monk, of his own accord, goes beyond what is of strict commandment, so in Divine worship he gives much more than is demanded of the ordinary Christian. If Christianity is the imitation of Jesus Christ, and if in Him the virtue of religion was more prominent than any other, the Church must prescribe at least the minimum practice of it for the faithful. She enjoins the observance of Sundays and holy days. She recommends, besides, morning and night prayers, prayer before and after meals and the *Angelus;* but these prayers she does not enforce under pain of sin, brief though the time they take.

What a contrast to the life of the monk ! With him Divine praise is the principal work. If it is not his exclusive duty, still it takes precedence of every other, and cannot be interfered with. Rendered each day with all possible

[1] Encycl. *E supremi.* [2] *Reg.*, c. lxxi.

solemnity and in such a way as to show forth all the beauties of the liturgy, it must transform the monk, by steeping his soul in the sentiments of the prayers which he utters.[1] It is the work which should make of him, in imitation of his Divine Model, a true adorer of God, an adorer " in spirit and in truth," desiring to carry out His Will not only in choir, when he prays in the name of the Church, but at every moment throughout the day.

Again, we meet the same accentuation with regard to Benedictine laws. For, if all the Church's morality is contained in the Holy Rule in those Scripture maxims that St. Benedict gives his sons to think over, and which he has gathered together in the chapter called " The Instruments of Good Works," the Rule goes further when it enjoins on the monks to obey, not only the abbot, but one another,[2] to possess nothing of their own,[3] to seek what is useful not to self but to another,[4] not to love their own will,[5] to be content under every humiliation and distress,[6] to repute themselves least of all, and not only to say it, but to believe it.[7] These are virtues that could be asked only of those to whom, as St. Benedict says, " nothing is more dear than Christ."[8]

The same holds in regard to asceticism. If no Christian life is possible without some participation in that lowliness of heart that our Lord came on earth to teach, St. Benedict expects much more from his sons than that limited obedience required by the Church. He devotes the longest chapter

[1] It is to provide fitting surroundings for the recitation of the Divine Office and for the worthy celebration of the functions and all liturgical ceremonies that Benedictine Churches, and also the Cathedrals where the Divine Office is recited by the canons, must be vast, spacious and imposing, adorned with all the perfection that art can devise, for nothing can be too beautiful to honour Him from Whom all proceeds and by Whom all exists.

[2] Reg., c. lxxi. [3] Ib., c. xxxiii. [4] Ib., c. lxxiii.
[5] Ib., c. iv. [6] Ib., c. vii. (sixth degree of Humility).
[7] Ib., c. vii. (seventh degree of Humility). [8] Ib., c. v

of his Rule to explain all the degrees of humility through which the monk must pass to arrive at a true love of God, and every one of his recommendations is intended to make of his disciple a man full of the spirit of reverence[1] which St. Benedict considers to be the starting-point of contemplation.

[1] For a clearer understanding of this so essentially Benedictine spirit notice how often St. Benedict recommends it in his Rule. Prol.: "Come, my children, hearken unto me, I will teach you the fear of the Lord." Chap. II: "Nothing is wanting to them that fear Him." Chap. III: "The abbot himself, however, must do every thing with the fear of God and in observance of the Rule." Chap. V: "In the swiftness of the fear of God." Chap. VII: "The first degree of humility is that a man always keep the fear of God before his eyes." Chap. IX: "Let all rise (at the *Gloria Patri*) from their seats out of honour and reverence to the Holy Trinity." Chap. XI: "All reverently rising." Chap. XI: "Let the abbot read the lesson from the Gospel, while all stand in awe and reverence." Chap. XIX: "We believe that the Divine Presence is everywhere." Chap. XXXI: "Let there be chosen out of the community as cellarer of the monastery, a God-fearing man." Chap. XXXVI: As infirmarian "one who is God-fearing." Chap. XLVII: "And let it be done with humility, gravity and awe." Chap. L: "Let the brethren perform the Work of God there where they are labouring, in godly fear, and on bended knees." Chap. LII: "Paying due reverence to God." Chap. LIV: "Whose soul is filled with the fear of God." Chap. LVIII: "That he promise before God." Chap. LXIV: "With the fear of God." Chap. LXV: "With the counsel of brethren who fear God." Chap. LXVI: "With the mildness springing from the fear of God." It is well, however, to notice that this fear of God so urgently recommended by St. Benedict is, naturally, not that servile fear which makes us dread the punishment due to ourselves before we consider the injury sin does to God. What he wished for his disciples was that spirit of profound reverence and adoration with which our Lord Himself was penetrated: *et procidens adoravit*, was said of Him when He prayed in the Garden of Olives.

CHAPTER V

BENEDICTINES AND OTHER ORDERS

INCIDENTALLY, in defining its chief virtue and calling attention to its aim, special work and social form, we have given the general aim of the Benedictine Order in the Church. A comparative study of its points of contact with, as well as its dissimilarities from, other Orders, may be instructive. Religious life is the renunciation of all things in order to follow Christ. It was outlined in these words of our Lord to St. Peter: "Amen I say to you, that you who have followed Me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man shall sit on the seat of His majesty, you also shall sit on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel: and every one who has left house or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands for My name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold and shall possess life everlasting."[1] "These are words drawing souls to voluntary poverty," says St. Peter Damian in his magnificent homily for the Feast of St. Benedict; "they have given birth to monasteries, and have

[1] We have translated the text given by St. Matt. xix. 27. SS. Mark and Luke quote the same words but with different renderings, not without interest. According to St. Mark x. 29 the motive assigned by our Lord for abandoning all things is "for My sake and for the Gospel." According to St. Luke's rendering, xviii. 29, it is: "for the kingdom of God's sake." The other two Evangelists indicate more clearly than does St. Matthew that the reward is, as it were, given twice over; and that partly in this life the hundredfold is given, or according to St. Luke, "much more," *in hoctempore*—"in this present time": *et in sæculo futuro*, or, as St. Luke puts it, *venturo, vitam æternum*. St. Mark, who is the most precise of all in mentioning the rewards given in this life, adds nevertheless *cum persecutionibus*, reminding us that they will be mingled with persecutions; a fact which we must not lose sight of when we examine the well-founded promises of our Lord.

peopled the cloisters with monks and the woods with hermits."[1]

A twofold sacrifice, both positive and negative, is implied in the promise of the Master and the declaration of the disciple. "Behold we have left all things and have followed Thee"; the renunciation of the things of this world is the negative, and the following after Christ the positive sacrifice. The negative, when irrevocable, establishes those who make it in what is called the religious state, because expropriation is only demanded that the practice of the virtue of religion may be constant and untrammelled.

This first degree of abandonment is common to all religious Orders, the preliminary *sine qua non* to entering the religious state. The Oratorians, for example, are not in the strict sense of the world *religious*, though sometimes considered as such, because they are not bound by vows,[2] nor are they formally constituted in a state of abandonment of worldly goods. On the other hand, this first renunciation, however meritorious, would not of itself constitute religious life. "It is a great thing," says St. Peter Damian, "to leave all for Christ, but a much greater to follow Him. For we read that many have left all for Christ, who did not follow Him after."[3] St. Jerome also, in his commentary on the same Gospel of St. Matthew, observes that the promise of the Master is not for those who merely give up the goods of this world, "for the philosopher Crates and many others despised riches; but the promises of our Lord are for those who have followed Him; which is the characteristic of apostles and believers."[4]

The following of Christ is the second distinctive element

[1] *Brev. Mon.*, Noct. III *in festo S. Benedicti.*

[2] These make only a yearly promise, called a simple oblation, the better to preserve its character as an optional engagement.

[3] *Brev. Mon.*, Noct. III *in festo S. Benedicti.*

[4] *Brev. Mon.*, Noct. III *in Comm. abbatum.*

of religious life, and the manner of this following is what differentiates religious Orders one from another. It gives each its physiognomy, varying with the purpose of each institute. The Redemptorist, for example, like all other religious, will say on the day of his profession: *Ecce nos reliquimus omnia, et secuti sumus Te.* But in his vows, which, in addition to the three ordinary ones, include a fourth vow, of preaching missions, he will find specified the particular character that his following of Christ is to take. Like all religious he follows Christ, but Christ under the aspect of Saviour of souls. For which reason his institute is known as the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer. For some Orders, Dominicans, Franciscans, Jesuits, the very personality of their founder is expressive of the aim of their life: to the son of St. Dominic the defence of truth, to the Friar Minor love of poverty and the hidden life, to a son of St. Ignatius the extension of the kingdom of God. Sometimes, and notably among the modern Congregations, the name of the institute indicates the end for which it was founded: thus, Congregation of the Mission, Brothers of Charity, Brothers of the Christian Schools, and others; also for Congregations of nuns, the Sisters of Charity, Sisters of Mercy, Nursing Sisters, Nuns of the Good Shepherd, Nuns of the Holy Child, Little Sisters of the Poor.

Obviously, if the same words of Christ have made all religious quit the world, others of the Master's sayings have outlined for many Orders and modern Congregations the particular way in which they were to follow Him. "Going through the whole world, teach all nations," has appealed forcibly to missioners, and they have gone forth as did Christ and His apostles. "That which you have done unto the least of My brethren you have done unto Me," the Master whispers in the ear of those destined to devote

themselves to works of mercy, corporal and spiritual. Words spoken at the time of the Passion appealed with special meaning to St. Dominic: "I have come to give testimony to the truth." To St. Francis and his sons is given deep appreciation of the promise of the First Beatitude: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

Is it so with the Benedictines? For them is there, over and above the general promise of the Lord to all who have followed Him, some word which symbolises their vocation? Without doubt; but that word is more comprehensive as it represents an ideal of greater scope. It is the word St. Paul puts on the lips of Christ at His entrance into the world: "Behold I come . . . to do Thy will."[1] Just as this word spoken of Christ expresses the absolute surrender of Himself to the Father, the simple and unqualified oblation that monks make of themselves on their profession consecrates their whole life to the service of God; and that, not for the practice of one or other virtue of the life of Christ, but for the reproduction of the whole trend of that life, in such circumstances and places as God shall indicate by the abbot or his representatives.

"In which will we are sanctified,"[2] St. Paul adds, when he recalls the words which accompanied the oblation of Christ. In this first oblation of the Saviour all Christians were offered and sanctified, but more especially those who, following in His footsteps, are pledged not only to keep the commandments, or to the practice of one or other of the evangelical counsels, but to the practice of all, as well as of the Christian virtues, when occasion may arise or obedience direct.

Hence what is essential to the vocation of monks in connection with the mission of Christ, their Model, is the fact of their belonging to God, and that absolutely for all

[1] Heb. x. 7. [2] Heb. x. 10.

their lives and for any work which may be demanded of them. Provided that their abbot, the representative of Christ in the monastery, shall order it, they may be occupied in the most diverse kinds of work: in teaching, ministering, studying, in corporal and spiritual works of mercy and even in tilling the soil. For years and years they may be engaged in such pursuits; only let them beware of regarding such work or occupation as intrinsic to their vocation, and not the temporary manifestation of God's will in their regard. What is essential and peculiar to their vocation is, that their lives reproduce and manifest unceasingly to the world the Christian ideal in its entirety; not only Christ's life of action, but His life of prayer. This ideal, properly understood, can be realised not by any single religious apart, but only by the well-organised activity of a whole abbey. Such becomes a mirror, reflecting Christ's life on earth: His life of prayer, preaching, teaching, manual toil, drawing to Himself all classes of society, and doing all these actions in the spirit of religion and adoration inseparable from His person.

Because the monk's life is like that of Christ, consecrated at all times and places to procure glory to God, it should be pervaded with that peace which the world cannot give. This peace, promised by Christ to His disciples, He has given so liberally to those vowed to the complete reproduction of His life, that " this peace which surpasses all understanding,"[1] as the Apostle describes it, has become the earthly recompense of their labours, the symbol of their lives, and the motto of their Order.

Before concluding these remarks on the *raison d'être* of the Benedictines in the Church, it would be well to call attention to the opinion of certain individuals not necessarily evil-intentioned, but whose information is defective

[1] Phil. iv. 7.

and whose views are non-supernatural. They concede that the Benedictine Order has rendered great services to the Church in past times, and they will even descant on them with satisfaction. But in the existing condition of things, they believe and loudly proclaim that its mission in the Church is at an end. According to them, the Order is an imposing ruin, which for past services might be left standing in the garden of the Church, but which is, in reality, absolutely useless.

The purpose of all religious Orders in the designs of Providence is to maintain perpetually in the Church the universality of the virtues of its Divine Founder. By a concise account of the actual condition of the Order, and an epitome of its exterior activities, an answer may be given to the inquiry: " What are Benedictines doing in the Church of the twentieth century ?" The reply would expose how ungrounded are the assertions of those who proclaim the decadence of the Order. It will be a demonstration from facts. And it would be absurd to think that any machinery necessary to the Church's life could cease to be without the whole Church suffering. The spirit of religion is quite as necessary to the life of the Church as the spirit of poverty, charity or truth. If the maintenance of this spirit has been entrusted by God to one Order above all others, it would be folly to declare that the mission of this Order has come to an end, when irreligion, rationalism and infidelity are being actively propagated by the enemies of Christ, and when to combat this fatal propaganda the world has need more than ever of the Order which made Europe Christian.

II

PAST HISTORY[1]

CHAPTER I

THE BEGINNINGS[2]

STATE OF ITALY AT THE BIRTH OF ST. BENEDICT—SOCIAL MISSION HE WAS CALLED TO FULFIL—LIFE OF ST. BENEDICT—RULE—FOUNDATIONS.

TO study the majestic figure of St. Benedict, and to form an adequate idea of the work he had to do and the importance of the social mission given him to accomplish, we must picture him in the environment of the troubled times in which he lived.

The epoch of his birth—according to the general tradition A.D. 480—was coincident with the collapse of the Roman Empire of the West. Italy then saw for the first time, in the person of Odoacer, a barbarian seated on the throne of the Cæsars. During a score of years preceding this usurpa-

[1] We have set down nothing here that has not been carefully examined and verified, and we have been careful to give for each period full references, thus enabling those who desire it to investigate for themselves. Up to the present day there exists unfortunately no history, properly so called, of monastic Orders. Taking all such works into account, the most complete seems to be that of Heimbucher, *Die Orden und Kongregationen der katholischen Kirche.* See also in the *Catholic Encyclopedia*, the excellent article: "The Order of St. Benedict"; and in the *Dict. de théol. Cath.*, i, ii: "Benoît de Nursie" and "Cisterciens." Montalembert in his *Monks of the West* goes only as far as the Concordat of Worms, 1122.

[2] On this period cf. Montalembert, *The Monks of the West*, i; G. Kurth, *Les origines de la civilisation moderne;* Grisar, *Geschichte Roms und der Päpste;* Gasquet, *A Sketch of the Life and Mission of St. Benedict.*

tion nine emperors had succeeded Valentinian, set up and deposed almost immediately by court intrigue, leaving Italy a prey to anarchy. These dissensions in the state account for the successive and repeated invasions of the barbarians. After the death of Theodosius, the barbarians, freed from the pressure of the strong hand which had kept them under control, had flung themselves on the dying Empire. Alaric and the Visigoths, Radagai and the Suevi, Attila and the Huns, Genseric and the Vandals, had all come in turn. Then, in the life-time of St. Benedict, Odoacer and the Heruli, Theodoric and the Ostrogoths, swarmed into Italy in enormous hordes, devastating and looting wherever they passed, and meeting with no effective resistance.

The first-comers passed like a cyclone only to pillage and destroy, withdrawing when they had secured the booty. The last, Odoacer and Theodoric, on the contrary, came to rule over Italy, and caused themselves to be recognised, the one as chief ruler, the other as King of Italy, by the Emperors of the East. Their rule had at least this advantage that it retarded for half a century the inrush of barbarians massed on the frontiers of Gaul and Germany.

If Italy, especially during the first years of Theodoric, enjoyed a brief respite, she was stricken and disconsolate in the extreme at the close of this long series of wars and pillage.

Egypt and Africa, the granaries of the Empire, had ceased to send her the supplies of corn on which her life depended; and the country left to its own resources became a prey to famine and pestilence.

"Confusion, corruption, despair and death were everywhere," writes Montalembert. Social dismemberment seemed complete. In temporal affairs the political edifice originated by Augustus—that monstrous assembly of two

hundred millions of human creatures of whom not a single individual was entitled to call himself free—was crumbling to dust under the blows of the barbarians. The Church was more than ever infected by heresy, schisms and divisions, which the obscure successors of St. Leo the Great in the Holy See endeavoured in vain to repress. In all the ancient Roman world, there did not exist a prince who was not a pagan, an Arian or a Eutychian. Authority, morals, laws, sciences, arts, religion itself, might have been supposed condemned to irremediable ruin. The germs of a splendid and approaching revival were still hidden from all eyes under the ruins of a crumbling world.[1]

The Social Mission of St. Benedict.

It was at this climax of confusion and almost universal barbarism at the end of the fifth century, when civilisation seemed to be rushing to its doom with the Empire, that St. Benedict appeared. Made more radiant by reason of the black darkness surrounding him in every direction, the figure of the patriarch of the monks of the West emerges, serene and peaceful, from the background of the disorders of the time, visibly raised up by God to put order into chaos, reorganise peoples, races, conditions, to transform barbarism into civilised society, and to make it Christian.

Life of St. Benedict—Rule—Foundations.[2]

Benedict was born in A.D. 480, in the province of Nursia. According to St. Gregory the Great—whose account we follow—he belonged to a noble family, and was sent when

[1] *The Monks of the West*, vol. ii, book 4, p. 389 ff.

[2] Cf. St. Gregory, *Vita S. Benedicti*, and 2 *Dial.;* in the seventeenth century: Mège, *Vie de S. Benoît ;* in the nineteenth century: Brandes, *Leben des heiligen Vaters Benedikt ;* Montalembert, op. cit., vol. ii,

still young to Rome to study. There, appalled by the excesses and crimes he saw rife on every side, "he drew back the foot he had already placed in the world," as St. Gregory expresses it in the graphic style of the Dialogues;[1] "and leaving studies, home and fortune in his desire to live for God alone," he retired to the mountainous region of Subiaco, some forty miles distant from Rome.

In those desolate and lonely towering mountains he found a grotto near to the ruins of an ancient villa of Nero. In this he lived for three years, occupied solely with God and known only to a monk, Romanus. This latter, whom he had met on his way thither and to whom he had confided his secret, gave him the religious habit, and enabled the young recluse to live free from temporal solicitude by bringing him at regular intervals the bread necessary for his sustenance.

After this first period of eremitical life, with its prayer, penance and contemplation, God willed that His servant should be discovered by some shepherds of the mountain. They conversed with him from time to time, and, in return for advice and instruction, provided him with the necessaries of life. Impressed by his austere piety, they related in the *paesetti*, or hamlets, what they had seen and heard. Others became still more attached to him, and imbued more and more with the beauty of his life, offered themselves to the holy solitary as disciples, and went to share his way of life in the rocky wilds of Subiaco.

Benedict continued to live thus for some years until the

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lib. 4; Cartier, *Les dialogues de St. Grég. le Grand;* Tosti, *Vita di S. Benedetto;* Gasquet, op. cit., p. 44. Then for the special questions of which they treat: Chamard, *Les reliques de St. Benoît;* Morin, *La translation de St. Benoît et la chronique de Leno; Revue Bénéd.*, 1902; and lastly G. Schnürer, *Der Geist der Benediktinerregel*, in the first chapter of his *Bonifatius*.

[1] *Dial.*, lib. 2, Prol.

monks of a neighbouring monastery, ambitious to have for their abbot one so famed for sanctity, went and begged him to accept the charge. Informed of the relaxed life led by this community (identified by some with Vicovaro), and not giving credit to their protestations of amendment, he refused. However, they persisted with new and pressing insistence, until finally he consented. But scarcely had he put his hand to the work, and tried to enforce the observance of Rule, than they began to devise a means of ridding themselves of the importunate reformer. They presented a cup of poisoned drink to him. Benedict, having, according to monastic usage, made the sign of the cross over it, the vessel containing the poison broke in pieces. The perfidy of the monks was clear; and the Saint returned to his peaceful and loved solitude among the mountains *vultu placido et mente tranquilla*—with serene countenance and tranquil mind, observes his biographer.

Other and more numerous disciples sought him out there, and Benedict, knowing that his mission was to manifest Christian family life to the world, built twelve monasteries in the outlying districts of Subiaco, and in each placed twelve monks and an abbot or, as the Dialogues style him, a "father." Between times, he remained with his first disciples at Subiaco.

Years rolled by, and Benedict was able, first in the original monastery, Subiaco, and then in the foundations, to organise that way of life that he would ultimately legislate for in his celebrated monastic code. He accepted many new subjects: parents, fearing the effect of the corrupt influences of the towns for their children, led them to the monastery to be brought up. The names of two of these, Maurus and Placid, both sons of Roman senators, have been preserved to us by the monastic chronicles, because they were, as the Dialogues show, more intimately associated

than the others with the life of the holy patriarch at Subiaco.

During those first years of Benedictine life took place also some of the miracles so simply recounted by St. Gregory: the well springing up to relieve the brethren of monasteries built on rocky sites[1] from the labour of fetching water, the bill-hook recovered, Maurus walking on the water to rescue the child, Placid.[2] Notwithstanding these prodigies, or rather because of them, Benedict incurred the hatred of a neighbour, Florentius. As St. Gregory remarks, "it is usual for the wicked to bear malicious envy to those whose virtues they will not imitate."[3] Fearing lest his presence might become a cause of persecution to his disciples, the holy founder went down to the Campagna with a small detachment of his monks. They explored and found a site suitable for a foundation near the ruined fortress-town of Cassinum. It was a small wooded mountain with a grove sacred to Apollo, on which the god was still worshipped two centuries after Constantine. There they built an oratory and a monastery which was to develop in course of time into the celebrated abbey of Monte Cassino.[4]

It was there that Benedict drew up his Rule, so filled with heavenly wisdom. In it he depicts the life he had previously led at Subiaco, which in all essentials—the importance and arrangement of the Office, the power and office of the abbot, the government of the monastery, the practice of obedience and the other monastic virtues—is still followed with slight modifications. in Benedictine houses to-day Thus, during a quarter of a century, in the years spent in comparative peace at Subiaco and Monte Cassino, the Saint had conceived, planned, and carried out the providen-

[1] Ib., lib. 2, ch. 5
[2] Ib., ch. 6.
[3] Ib., ch. 7.
[4] Ib., ch. 8.

tial scheme of the monasteries, which in the near future were to be propagated throughout Europe, bring all the elements of peace round their walls, and spread abroad the blessing of civilisation, love of work, and the Christian life.

During this period Italy was at peace under Theodoric. Anxious to ensure the goodwill of his people, he suppressed abuses of every kind and dealt out equal justice to all. He drew to his court the men most renowned for learning, notably Boethius and Cassiodorus. But no sooner had the institute, whence was to issue the reorganisation of Christian society, come into being and given signs of vigorous life, than wars and disorders broke out anew. Theodoric disgraced the last years of his reign by a persecution of the Christians. He had Boethius and Symmachus assassinated, and while he connived at having the Christian temples taken over by the Arians, he was himself murdered by the hand of an assassin, A.D. 526, and on his death anarchy recommenced.

Belisarius, it is true, taking advantage of the dissensions of the barbarians, succeeded in reconquering the greater part of Italy, but, recalled to the East by Justinian, he left the country without defence, and the Goths, driven back on Pavia, returned once more. Led on by Totila, they marched as far as Naples, meeting with no resistance, pillaging and plundering all the country they traversed.

It was during the course of this invasion that some other miracles recorded by St. Gregory took place, and thus brought the barbarians themselves to recognise the sanctity of St. Benedict—not only chieftains such as Zalla, but even the redoubtable Totila, to whom the Saint foretold the date of his death, after having charged him fearlessly with his deeds of cruelty. Ten years later the prophecy was fulfilled at Lentaggio. With his decease, the power of the Ostro-

goths waned; and, ably administered, the peninsula could have held its own against the barbarians, had not the intriguing Court of Constantinople compassed the downfall of Narses, the one general able to cope with them, and thus lost Italy to the Empire by betraying it to the Lombards.

Seizing their chance, the barbarians led by Alboin invaded the peninsula, which in a few years, with the exception of Rome, Ravenna, and some neighbouring towns strongly defended, was completely conquered. Once again the remainder of the country was devastated, and Monte Cassino put to the flames.

This disaster was made known to Benedict in a prophetic vision which he related to his monks some time before he died, assuring them that their lives would be saved, which indeed came to pass. For himself, feeling his end approach, on March 21, A.D. 543, he had himself borne to the Church, and there, as St. Gregory tells us, "having received the body and blood of the Lord, sustained by the arms of his disciples, he died standing, giving forth his last sigh with words of prayer."[1]

The pillage and burning of Monte Cassino could not prevent the work of the Patriarch of western monks from attaining ultimate success. As already pointed out, he had made several foundations around Subiaco before going to the Campagna. Even after he moved to Monte Cassino he founded yet another monastery at Terracina.[2] To return, however, to the fugitive monks from Monte Cassino, having escaped from the barbarians, as St. Benedict predicted, they fled to Rome, and from the Eternal City, which remained, even after it lost its political importance, the centre and source of Christian civilisation, the rising order spread abroad and shed its light throughout the entire world.

[1] *Dial.*, lib. 2, ch. 37. [2] Ch. 22.

CHAPTER II

SPREAD OF THE ORDER

St. Gregory the Great, A.D. 590–604.[1]

St. Benedict's sons were welcomed to Rome by Pope Pelagius II (579–590), and they established themselves in a monastery adjoining the basilica of St. John Lateran. Many vocations came to them, doubtless because of the relationship between several of their members and Roman patrician families, but much more because of the sanctity of the first abbots, Constantius, Valentinian, and Simplician, whom St. Benedict had himself trained in monastic life. Some few years after their arrival, he who was one day to be known as St. Gregory the Great founded in the Eternal City another monastery, dedicated to St. Andrew, in which he took the Benedictine habit.

Son of a senator, belonging to that illustrious *gens Anici*, praised by St. Augustine and St. Jerome "as having given more virgins to Christ than consular personages to the republic," having himself been prætor of Rome in early manhood, Gregory gave to the world a magnificent example of Christian faith by renouncing the brilliant future which was opening out before him, to consecrate himself absolutely to the service of God. It is a striking example of the blessings promised by Christ to those who quit all to follow Him—that the Roman patrician found in the cloister peace and joy, surpassing all that wealth and pleasure had afforded him in the world. *Alta quietis meæ gaudia perdidi*, "I

[1] Cf. Ioan. Diaconus, *Vita Sti. Greg. Magni*; Mabillon, *Acta SS O.S.B.*; Montalembert, *The Monks of the West*, vol. ii, book 5; Cartier, *Les Dial. de St. Grég.*; Grisar, "St. Gregor der Grosse," in the work *Geschichte Roms und der Päpste*.

have lost the deep joys of my tranquillity,"[1] he writes to the sister of the Emperor Maximilian, when constrained to leave his cloister for the Apostolic Chair. In the preface to his Dialogues he laments to Peter the Deacon: "When mourning over all that is fleeting, all that changes, my poor soul recalls what it was of old time in our monastery, when it thought only on heaven and soared above this mortal body on the wings of contemplation; when it loved the thought of death, feared by most men, as the entrance to life and the recompense of labour."[2]

These same sentiments are on his lips throughout his pontificate; they appear in his letters to the patricians John Andrew and Narses, or to his friend St. Leander, Bishop of Seville. The same contemplative spirit breathes through all the correspondence of St. Gregory, which, like his homilies, retains all its vivacity and charm by reason of the simplicity of his style, his clearness, supernatural views, and perfect sincerity. Indeed, the author of the Dialogues would have deemed it the greatest happiness that could have befallen him, had he been able to end his days in the monastery. But God, who had other designs upon him, did not will to leave him in the happy obscurity that the descendant of the Anicii enjoyed in his ancient palace on the Cœlian Hill, converted, like his villas in Sicily, into a monastery.

After the formative period always allowed by Providence to those destined to play a prominent part in the Church, in this case spent in deep study of the Scriptures and the practice of all monastic virtues, Gregory was drawn from his retirement. Pope Pelagius II bethought himself of the former prætor of Rome, and determined to send him as nuncio to Constantinople. The diplomacy with which Gregory secured the much needed help that Rome was soliciting against the Lombards, the retractation which he

[1] *Epist.*, 1, 5. [2] Preface to the *Dialogues*.

wrested from the patriarch Eutychius who denied the real resurrection of the body, brought the envoy of the Holy See so much into prominence that, some years later, when Pelagius II died of the plague, Gregory was chosen to succeed him, with the unanimous consent of senate, people and clergy.

Thus was Gregory once more torn away from his dear monastic life. For no sooner had the envoy of Pelagius returned to Rome than he had hastened to take his place once more among the monks of Monte Cœlio, by whom he had soon afterwards been elected abbot. Hard and bitter indeed was the sacrifice required this time; apart from the enforced separation from his monastery, in which he had found such happiness, Gregory on mounting the pontifical throne found the Church in a situation wellnigh hopeless.

Continually menaced in Italy by the Lombards, still Arians, with only a very inadequate support from the Byzantine emperors, always taken up with their own quarrels and intrigues, hemmed in on every side by barbarian, heretical or idolatrous kingdoms, the Church seemed on the verge of being annihilated by the coalition of these hostile forces. And yet, with God's help and by the genius of the first Benedictine Pope, she eventually triumphed over her sworn enemies. By his almost incredible virtue, energy, patience and tact, Gregory quelled the Lombards, and led them into the fold of Christ. He succeeded in making allies of the emperors of Constantinople, and bringing down the pride of its patriarchs. He hunted down heresy and forced it to capitulate in Africa, Spain and Gaul; and by the despatch of St. Augustine to England he merited the title of Apostle of England, given him in the breviary.

"He enlightened the whole Church by his doctrine; governed the East and West with as much vigour as humi-

lity; and gave to the world a perfect model of ecclesiastical government," declares Bossuet. And Montalembert, who quotes this testimony, is not less eulogistic in his appreciation of the first monk who sat upon the Chair of St. Peter: "This monk," he writes, "the most illustrious of all those who have been reckoned among the Sovereign Pontiffs, was to shine there with a splendour which none of his predecessors had equalled, and which conferred a supreme prestige upon the institute from which he came. Gregory, who shares with Pope Leo I the rare distinction of receiving by universal consent the double surname of Saint and Great, will be an everlasting honour to the Benedictine Order as he is to the papacy. By his genius, but especially by the charm and ascendancy of his virtue, he was destined to organise the temporal power of the popes, to develop and regulate their spiritual sovereignty, to establish their paternal supremacy over the new-born crowns and races which were to become the great nations of the future, and to be called France, Spain, and England. It was he who inaugurated the Middle Ages, modern society, and Christian civilisation."[1]

Nor was the part played by St. Gregory in the spread of the Benedictine Order less important. "By his means," says Cardinal Gasquet,[2] "the Order became associated with the chief works of the Church and grew in proportion to the demand made upon it." Throughout his reign Gregory retained monks at his court as counsellors, employed them as his co-operators in the government of dioceses, entrusted them with delicate embassies to European princes. He expended part of the patrimony of the Church in founding monasteries, notably Classis, which became in time one of the great centres of religious life in Italy. With characteristic forethought, he provided for the future of the

[1] Montalembert, ii, 13. [2] Op. cit.

Order, making monastic property almost inviolable, and securing for the monks freedom in the election of their abbots. Gregory was not one to stop at general precautions and half-measures. He was determined that nothing should hinder the monks from the Divine service, and therefore he granted privilege of exemption to several abbeys, attaching them directly to the Holy See, thus making them so many citadels to uphold and defend the rights of the court of Rome throughout the length and breadth of Europe. But the most signal service of all from the point of view developed here: it was St. Gregory who gave the great impetus for expansion to the Order of St. Benedict by the despatch of St. Augustine to England.

St. Augustine and the Benedictines in England.[1]

Although Christianity had been introduced into this country long before, England, in consequence of the invasions of Jutes, Angles, and Saxons, had relapsed almost completely into paganism and barbarism. It had been for years the cherished ambition of Gregory to reintroduce the faith into it. When still abbot of Monte Cœlio he had been so impressed with the beauty and noble bearing of a group of young slaves exposed for sale in the Roman Forum, that he had stopped to inquire their nationality and whether they were Christians. Informed that they were pagans from the isle of the Angli, he commented: *Bene Angli, quasi Angeli.* A longing impelled him to go straight to the Sovereign Pontiff, to ask his permission to gain these youths and the people they represented to the Christian faith. With his wonted eloquence he pleaded his cause, and having got the sanction he sought, set out without delay.

[1] Cf. Brou, S.J., *St. Aug. de Cantorbéry et ses compagnons.* See also the *Catholic Encyclopedia* on "Augustine and Canterbury."

But, in his missionary ardour, he had not given a thought to the devotion which the Roman people entertained for him. No sooner had his absence become known in the city than the people ran to St. Peter's clamouring to have the Sovereign Pontiff's decision revoked. Pelagius II yielded before their entreaties and despatched couriers to overtake Gregory and order him to return to Rome, and to leave this missionary undertaking to others. "It was not as missioner but as Pope," remarks Montalembert, "that Gregory was to conquer England to the Church." That which he had been so near realising himself, he was to accomplish through his brethren in St. Benedict, and he had been barely six years Pope when he entrusted to Augustine, a monk of Monte Cœlio, the mission to preach the faith to the invaders of Great Britain (596).

Augustine set out, accompanied by forty of the Roman monks, and bearing letters from the Pope to those princes through whose territory he would have to pass, he reached Gaul. On his way he had striven to make known the Rule of St. Benedict in those monasteries which gave him hospitality. After a short rest in Paris the party took ship at Boulogne, and, after a calm crossing, they landed at the Isle of Thanet, about twelve miles from Canterbury.[1] The news of their arrival reached the King of Kent, who was married to a French Catholic princess. He went to meet them, and although not himself converted by his first interview with Augustine, he allowed him to take up his abode with his monks at Canterbury, and to preach freely to the people.

This was promising for a beginning. Owing, no doubt, to Queen Bertha's influence and that of the Frankish priests who had come in her train to England, but much

[1] The congregation of Subiaco established in 1860 the Monastery of St. Augustine in Ramsgate, which is not far from Ebbsfleet, where the first Benedictines are supposed to have landed.

more to the edification given to all by the life of Augustine and his monks, the king asked for instruction. The following Pentecost he received baptism publicly.

The king's example could not fail to be followed by numerous conversions. Gregory, to whom the good news had been sent without delay, saw at once that his representative would have need of ampler powers to solve the difficulties which would crop up. Augustine, by his orders, went over to Gaul to receive episcopal consecration. Then the new bishop lost no time in returning to England to spend himself on the instruction of pagans who were waiting for baptism. Every month their numbers grew until, on Christmas Day 597, Augustine, assisted by his monks, had the inestimable consolation of baptising more than 10,000 persons in the waters of the Swale, near the mouth of the Medway.

Such were the beginnings, truly blessed by God, of that apostolate which St. Benedict's sons were to exercise in England in a way so marked that Cardinal Manning could say: "Catholic England has been called the Apostolate of St. Benedict,"[1] or, as Cardinal Gasquet puts it: "A history of the work done by the Benedictines in England would be the history of the Church herself in this country."[2] There is no other example on record of an Order so closely united to a nation or so bound up with its institutions alike civil and religious.

Dom Tosti,[3] too, observes that the Benedictine spirit left its unmistakable impress on this country; and even after the schism of Henry VIII the English people remained one of the most religious in Europe, one of the most responsive to the beauties of the Church's liturgy, and most penetrated with that spirit of religion which

[1] Cf. Dom Gasquet, op. cit. [2] Ib.
[3] Dom Tosti, *Vita di S. Benedetto.*

it was St. Benedict's mission, as already shown, to renew and perpetuate throughout the world.

The work of the Benedictines in England is not less remarkable for its share in the development of the nation, than for the lasting and penetrating power of its religious influence. It is also characteristic of this work that it served as a type and model for the apostolate that the Benedictines were to exercise throughout the whole of Northern Europe.

The first concern of Augustine and his monks, in every place where they settled, was to organise a monastery that so their primary duty of the Divine service might be fulfilled in choir. In this they were faithful to the spirit of their Order: St. Benedict himself had set the example at Monte Cassino, it had been the invariable practice in monasteries ever since; moreover, the Rule enjoined that "nothing was to be preferred to the work of God."[1] St. Benedict considered that from this work, worthily accomplished, ought to flow all the graces, light and strength needed for the wants of the Church and the salvation of souls, wherever his sons were established. Only when the Divine service had been organised and its continuance rendered feasible, even in the absence of some members, the monks began to think of bearing abroad this vigorous supernatural life, and, aided by this liturgical prayer recited by their brothers in the monastery, give themselves up to any work for souls which offered in the places where they found themselves.

It was this perfection of order, this setting of the glory of God above all, and the spirit in which the monks strove to further it by the whole tenor of their lives, which charmed King Ethelbert, and prepared the way for the conquest of his kingdom to Christianity. At their first interview

[1] *Reg.*, ch. xliii.

he merely gave Augustine leave to take up his residence in his capital and to preach there. What really converted him was, as Cornelius Clifford points out,[1] the disinterestedness of this truly evangelic life, which sought above all else the kingdom of God and His justice.

The sons of St. Benedict were apostles of England, and they initiated its power, social and political. In England, as in France at a later date, unity of Faith led imperceptibly to political unity. From South to North, from East to West, the missioners went through all the island, setting up monastic houses everywhere. In course of time pagans who had been converted settled round these first Benedictine abbeys to participate in the spiritual, intellectual, and material advantages they had to bestow.

Nor was all the time of the monks occupied in reciting the Divine Office. As the Rule enjoins,[2] some part of their day was given to intellectual work, or tilling the soil. These labours, carried out like all else in the monastery with the regularity of obedience and the courageous endurance that comes with the thought of working for God, gave results inevitably superior to anything the nomadic barbarians around them had to show.

The ever-increasing prosperity of these monastic houses, the order and peace pervading them, the fact of being able to receive, with the blessing of religious instruction and the Sacraments, an education, so rare in those days, caused many colonies to grow up around the abbeys.

Thus were growing up and developing around the Benedictine abbeys cities, such as Canterbury, Rochester, Winchester, Gloucester, Durham, Worcester, Norwich, Bath, Coventry and Peterborough, to name but a few.

The predominance of Benedictine influence in the religious formation and the organisation of the Church in

[1] Op. cit. [2] Cf. *Reg.*: *De opere manuum quotidiano*.

England is manifestly due to the fact that for centuries all the ecclesiastical hierarchy was in the hands of Benedictines. Nearly all the bishoprics were founded by them, and many cathedral chapters were composed of the Black Monks. "Never in the history of any Order, or of the Church in any age, was the union of secular and religious ministries carried to such identity," declared Cardinal Manning; and he added: "A Benedictine cathedral with a seminary by its side is a type of what once was, and, if the Church of England is to do its great work of grace, of what, whether by this same identification or by the harmonious unity of the two ministries, must be again."[1]

Apostles, colonisers, founders of towns, bishops and shepherds, the monks were, moreover, the educators and first historians of England. In the solitude of the cloister monks studied, transcribed or taught, while their brethren went forth to preach or to labour in the fields. Not only did they preserve in their library the famous "codex" of Holy Scripture, the liturgical monuments, the writings of the Fathers and ecclesiastical authors, but, by persevering industry in multiplying copies day after day, they saved at the opening of the Middle Ages, from being lost for ever, the classics and monuments of profane learning.

In many abbeys monks chronicled events happening within the precincts or in the country around; and thus were compiled those monastic annals which became at a later period the groundwork and sometimes the only sources of history forthcoming for a whole epoch or region.

Then in many of the abbeys which they founded Augustine or his successors opened schools, which were at first carried on in the cloister, and soon drew to them the best men of the time as masters or pupils. Thus at Canterbury St. Theodore taught, at Wearmouth St. Benedict Biscop,

[1] Cf. Dom Gasquet, op. cit.

at Jarrow St. Bede; at Malmesbury lived the famous poet-monk, St. Aldhelm; York, one of the most famous schools in England in the eighth century, had among its pupils the famous Alcuin. Exeter and Nursling had the glory of teaching and training St. Boniface.

In England, as elsewhere in the countries of Western Europe, to the monks is due the Christian revival of all arts, which after the invasion of the barbarians fell into oblivion everywhere except in the cloister. If in the Middle Ages monks were not the only architects, sculptors, painters, they were, at least, the artists of most ability and originators of new designs. To confine ourselves to architecture alone, and in that department to the best known of the numerous examples of it in the churches built by St. Augustine's disciples, we shall mention only Canterbury, Westminster, Durham, Ely and Peterborough.

If we would form some estimate of the social and religious influence of the Order in this country, we need only reflect what must have been the influence for good of abbots and bishops, such as St. Augustine, Blessed Lanfranc, and St. Anselm, who, in the space of a few centuries, succeeded each other in the see of Canterbury; of monks like Bede, that perfect type of the learned Benedictine, always occupied, as stated in the lessons of his office, in prayer, reading or teaching, who worked up to the last hour of life, and was held in so great veneration that his writings were read publicly in the Church even during his lifetime. There was Egbert also, the founder of York, who had Alcuin himself among his disciples. Then we come to understand why Cardinals Manning and Newman spoke of the Order in terms of such enthusiastic gratitude in the century that has just passed.

Germany and St. Boniface.[1]

We have dwelt at length on the Benedictine work in England, because it is typical of work of a similar kind carried through by the sons of St. Benedict in Northern Europe. Everywhere we meet them, apostles, clearers, diggers, colonisers, teachers, organisers of social life and founders of towns. Invariably working in the same spirit, they establish first what concerns the glory of God, the Divine Office, and then give themselves to whatever is most needed. As the most pressing need of those times was the religious instruction of the barbarous peoples, the Benedictines of the seventh and eighth centuries devoted themselves to the apostolate and to missionary work.

St. Boniface, 680–755: early training and first mission to Friesland.

Among these monk-missioners the most famous after Augustine was the Anglo-Saxon monk, Winfrid, later called St. Boniface.

Sprung from a noble stock, he entered the abbey at Exeter as a child oblate, then went to Nursling Abbey in Winchester diocese as a monk. The training Winfrid had

[1] With regard to all that concerns St. Boniface we have but given a résumé of his life, published by M. Kurth in the Collection: *Les Saints*, Paris, Lecoffre, 1902. Owing to the scholarly arrangement of facts, the clear division of the subject, the intimate knowledge of religious life shown by the writer, and to the marvellous way in which he brings out the poetic traits of this great missionary monk, this Life is fitly styled a masterpiece in hagiographic literature. In the Appendix there will be found a note mentioning all the ancient and modern works dealing with St. Boniface. Among the well-known works issued since the year 1902, it is well to point out the *Bonifatius* of G. Schnürer, in the Collection *Weltgeschichte in Charakterbildern*.

in the cloister was as thorough intellectually as it was religiously. Nursling was as famous for its studies as for its strict observance. Winfrid showed himself a worthy disciple of his masters; he was humble, obedient, charitable, exact in all the monastic duties. In a few years he became one of the most learned monks in the abbey, and his abbot placed him over the claustral school, although he was not yet a priest. Ordained at thirty, chosen then to represent the abbey at several provincial councils, in the conduct of all affairs entrusted to him he gave evidence of so much virtue and competence that he had the confidence of all, and public opinion already designated him to fill the next see which should become vacant in the country. But Winfrid's thoughts and aspirations were elsewhere; and it is characteristic of him all his life that he refused honours and dignities, even ecclesiastical, when he could, or eagerly laid them aside when free to do so.

For a long time he had felt a strong interior call to evangelise that barren and waste region of Germany whence his ancestors, the Saxons, had come to England. Among the nations still lost in the thick darkness of paganism his own people, the Frisians, appealed most to his zeal; with them he naturally wished to begin his apostolic work. The preliminary step was to obtain his abbot's sanction, and we can well understand how reluctant would be the latter to part with the most promising monk in his abbey. However, he realised in time that the call was from God, and Winfrid, full of hope, was able to embark for Friesland.

This first mission came to nothing owing to the political disturbances in the country. Pepin of Heristal had just died, and the Frisians had risen up against the supremacy of the Franks, the sole supporters that religion could count on in the country. St. Willibrord himself had perforce to quit his dear mission, and bide the time in prayer in

his abbey of Echternach, until God should permit him to resume the work. Winfrid had travelled as far as Utrecht when he realised that the time was unpropitious, and that he could do nothing in the crisis of general hostility that prevailed.

To Nursling he returned therefore, and was chosen abbot that same year, but so many were the representations he made to the Bishop of Winchester about his missionary vocation being thwarted, that the Bishop yielded to his entreaties and had another monk elected abbot in his stead. Winfrid then set out for Rome with some pilgrims who were going to pray at the tomb of St. Peter. The failure of his first venture had opened his eyes, and he saw the urgent necessity for formal recognition by the Holy See if he were to have any authority among these barbarous tribes.

He was cordially welcomed by Gregory II to Rome, and the rest of that year he spent in the Eternal City, to become penetrated with the mind and wishes of the Roman See. He went back in the spring of 719 with an official letter of the Sovereign Pontiff authorising him to preach the gospel to the idolaters, and styling him "his fellow-labourer in the ministry of the word of God."

The monk, as we said previously, when quoting Mgr. Freppel, a man of God above all, is therefore a man of the Church, and the Roman Church. Winfrid was this all his life, but especially from this first sojourn in Rome where his name had been changed from the Anglo-Saxon 'Winfrid' to 'Boniface' by the Pope, as a token of the new bond contracted with the Holy See. Throughout the whole twenty-six years of his laborious ministry, the apostolic missioner kept in close touch with the Sovereign Pontiffs, referring to them in doubtful matters, careful always to conform his conduct to their ideas and prescriptions, and

to make the liturgy and authority of the Roman Church recognised wherever he went.

When he returned from his pilgrimage, Boniface found the prevalent state of things very favourable for recommencing his enterprise. Duke Radbod had died, and Charles Martel had succeeded in gaining his successor to the side of the Franks. St. Willibrord had re-entered his diocese of Utrecht; and Boniface could work under the aged bishop's supervision for the three ensuing years. This was his noviciate to apostolic work, and so marked was the success of his first missions that the apostle of Friesland, who felt his life drawing to a close, believed he had found in him his successor, and wanted to consecrate him a bishop.

Whether Boniface thought the mission was sufficiently thriving, or whether, as he represented to the Bishop of Utrecht, the Pope's letter enjoined on him a general apostolate to the idolaters—not only did he refuse to countenance the proposal, but fearing lest new pressure might be brought to bear on him, he quitted St. Willibrord, and crossed to the right bank on the Rhine, where he was in his own field of apostolate.

In this journey to Hesse and Thuringia, as M. Kurth relates,[1] took place the charming episode of the meeting of Boniface and the boy Gregory, grandson of Dagobert II, aged fourteen or fifteen, at the abbey of Pfalzel. The youth, hearing the monk-missioner's explanation of the passage of Scripture read that day at table, was so much impressed with the unction and persuasiveness of the Saint as he set forth the hidden meaning of the words, that from that hour he resolved to follow him to "learn from him the meaning of the Divine writings." And then and there he followed him to the end of his life, nothing availing to turn him from this sudden and enthusiastic vocation.

[1] *St. Boniface*, ch. 2, p. 25.

CONVERSION OF HESSE AND THURINGIA.

Boniface left the castle to resume his journey to Frankish Germany on the right bank of the Rhine, the new scene of his missionary labours. The country was then in a state of semi-barbarism, although it had at one time been evangelised by St. Kilian and the Irish monks. The indifference of the Merovingian kings, lack of good organisation, the individualistic spirit of the Irish monks themselves and their adhesion to a liturgy not that of Rome, had all combined to mar their complete success.

Many then were the difficulties that Boniface had to encounter on commencing his ministry in Germany. He bethought himself of the recommendations of Gregory II, and despatched one of his companions to consult the Holy Father on the most pressing affairs, and to get advice on difficult questions. The Pope, when sending back the answers, also summoned Boniface to Rome. The three years of previous intercourse, all that had reached him from various quarters, convinced him of the missioner's exceptional sanctity and ability, and the moment seemed opportune for bestowing on him ampler powers. The Pope once more examined him on his orthodoxy and learning, and informed him of his intention to consecrate him regionary Bishop, with no diocese fixed, but the whole of Germany for his field of action.

Though Boniface had resigned the dignity conferred on him by his brethren at Nursling, and had evaded that to which St. Willibrord would have raised him, yet he could not oppose the will of the Holy Father, observes his biographer, St. Willibrord. On November 7, 722, he received episcopal consecration.

God signified His approval of the choice of Gregory and of the submission of Boniface in the event. For, on the

return of the latter, formidable obstacles vanished before him like smoke, and the future prosperity of the mission seemed certain. In addition to the episcopal character and the papal letters authorising him to preach to the Saxons and Thuringians, he had a strong bodyguard furnished him by the redoubtable Charles Martel at the request of the Holy See.

With these he could go forward confidently, and as the conversions multiplied on his way, he saw that the moment had come to take a decisive step. To convince the pagans of the impotence of their gods, he felled the oak sacred to Thor, at Geismar in Hesse. The pagans stood by, expecting the god to avenge this impious deed by some awful chastisement; but when they saw that the challenge remained unheeded, their credulity was disillusioned, and numbers were converted.

The fall of the sacred oak was symbolic of the defeat of paganism in those parts. The organisation of the Church then became possible; on the site of the sacred oak a chapel was raised and dedicated to St. Peter, and a monastery was founded close by, at Fritzlar. The Pope wrote again to the Thuringians urging them to build churches and a residence for their bishop. His exhortations were attended to, churches were erected, and the monastery of St. Michael of Ohrdruff arose at the northern end of the Thuringian Forest.

The harvest of souls was great, and Boniface found it impossible without more helpers than he had to garner it into the Church. If the recent converts from paganism were lacking in the knowledge, they were still more wanting in the self-denial needed for apostolic work. In his difficulty Boniface wrote to his brethren at Nursling and to the Wessex abbeys, with which he had some connection, to ask for assistance.

Then his ascendancy over those who had once known him became apparent; his appeal met its response in Southern England by the influx into Germany of so many monks and nuns of more than ordinary ability and holiness that he had to enlarge the monasteries of Ohrdruff in Thuringia and of Amoeneburg in Hesse, and to found three abbeys for nuns, of which the chief, Bisschofsheim, was entrusted to the gentle and cultured Lioba, his cousin.

M. Kurth thus summarises this earlier part of St. Boniface's life: "The work of the evangelisation of Germany was on a sure footing; great monasteries had arisen everywhere throughout the land—monks, energised by the strong personality of their founder, were bearing the fire of Christianity into the very midst of paganism and keeping it alive amid the stormy tempests. The monasteries were civilising centres in Germany years before a regular hierarchy was established. They were the first weavings of a net of moral and intellectual culture that would in time envelop the whole country. If Germany is Christian to-day, to her monks, in the first place, she owes it. Not only did they instil higher beliefs into minds, or a purer faith into hearts, but with true patriotism they imported the arts of peace into their adopted country."[1]

BONIFACE MADE ARCHBISHOP; ORGANISATION OF THE HIERARCHY.

In 731 Gregory II, Boniface's patron, passed away, having placed Germany on the roll of Catholic nations, as his illustrious predecessor had placed England. Gregory III conferred yet higher marks of confidence on Boniface; for, in reply to the regionary bishop's letter of congratulation on his election, he sent him the pallium, which raised

[1] *St. Boniface.* L'épiscopat, 53.

him to the rank of archbishop. This put him in a position to achieve and perfect his work.

Henceforth Germany was to be an ecclesiastical province consisting of several dioceses, the bishops of which were to be Boniface's nominees. The work before him, then, was not one of evangelisation, as heretofore, but rather the organisation of this Church, and the permanent welding of its hierarchy to the Holy See.

Boniface began this new mission in a country he had only passed through on his arrival in Germany; for when he found that Bavaria had been converted some generations before, he had hastened on to the more needed conversion of Hesse and Thuringia. This accomplished, he returned to Bavaria, at the request of Rome. What was needed by this Church, according to M. Kurth,[1] was the grouping of its chiefs under a metropolitan, periodical holding of councils, and union with Rome, the centre of the Christian world. The various causes of disorder were rectified by Boniface, who nominated bishops to the sees of Salzburg, Freising, and Ratisbon, long vacant, and convened a national council, in which he put into force the laws concerning Church discipline. Moreover, the example of his own life and labours drew so many persons to religious life, that in the course of a few years twenty-nine new monasteries sprung up in Bavaria, which guaranteed the permanence of the religious reforms in that country.

In Hesse and Thuringia there were no facilities for establishing the hierarchy, for there were, as yet, no towns. Boniface remedied this by creating new sees, Buraburg, Erfurt, and Würzburg, in close proximity to his monasteries. The most virtuous monks among his followers he placed in them as bishops.

A quarter of a century had been passed in apostolic

[1] Ib., L'archiépiscopat, 61.

labours, and he was no longer young; he might, indeed, have regarded his life's task as completed. Germany, which when he arrived was wild, waste, uncivilised, and plunged in pagan superstition, he left converted to the Faith, in charge of bishops and superiors of monasteries trained by himself, loyally attached to the See of Rome, and provided with a complete hierarchy.

Yet his labours had not reached their term; he had before him those grand enterprises which were to call forth his genius for organisation, his love of monastic life, his heroism and apostolic zeal. These enterprises were the reform of the Frankish Church, the foundation of Fulda, and a renewed attempt for the conversion of Friesland.

THE REFORM OF THE FRANKISH CHURCH.

Although Gaul had been Christian for some centuries, she witnessed the total disorganisation of religion brought about by the Saracen invasions. Charles Martel, sufficiently powerful to withstand the invader, saved the Church in a country where otherwise it would have been completely stamped out. He did her a serious wrong, however, when he gave to his soldiers the bulk of her possessions in territories successfully defended by them. Perhaps in this he was actuated less by the desire to reward their valour, than to punish the tardiness of some bishops in coming to his assistance. Bishoprics and abbeys thus became the spoil of lords and fighting men, who, as has been written, "put on the episcopal robes without adopting the episcopal manner of life,"[1] and continued to hunt, make war, and live just as before, to the great scandal of the faithful.

Charles admitted his fault, and, to show his goodwill to the Church, gave later his valuable support to the Holy See and Boniface, in the conversion of Germany. But as

[1] L'Abbé Gagnol, *Histoire du moyen-âge*, Paris, Poussielgue.

he never revoked the sanction for spoliation he had given, the Church of Gaul remained in a state of complete disorganisation at his death. "Its Catholic life seemed to be suspended," writes M. Kurth, "its organs benumbed and paralysed. The councils, to which are due the best impulse for civilisation in the sixth century, had fallen into desuetude; the metropolitan hierarchy was a thing of the past; bishops' sees were unoccupied, some for centuries, others, in a worse plight, had fallen a prey to grasping laymen or immoral priests. Some of these intruders held several dioceses and abbeys at once: Hugh, Charles Martel's nephew, had the Sees of Paris, Rouen and Bayeux, and a trooper, Milo, held in his profane hands the crosiers of Rheims and Trèves, two of the most venerable churches in Gaul.

"The lesser clergy were, as might be expected, no better: their ignorance and coarseness were in keeping with their venality and incontinence. Their ranks were recruited from a number of immoral men who coveted only wealth and privilege, and who had not the slightest intention of discharging their onerous duties. Fugitive slaves received the tonsure to escape from their masters. Adventurers, who were not even in minor orders, put on ecclesiastical dress and roamed the country, rousing the fanaticism of the masses, pandering to their vices, preaching heterodoxy, and displaying amulets for sale.

"The evil was aggravated by troops of priests from overseas, who roamed from one diocese to another, evading all ecclesiastical control, teaching what they would and living as they pleased; always disturbing society by their obstinate adherence to national custom, such as the Irish way of wearing the tonsure and of reckoning Easter."[1]

We have given almost in full M. Kurth's account of this unhappy epoch, that it may be seen from what depths

[1] *St. Boniface*, ch. 5, p. 87 ff.

Boniface had to extricate the Frankish Church, and that his qualifications as organiser may be the better appreciated. In the space of five years he purged, raised, and reformed it completely.

The revival of synods was the chief means he used to attain his end. Nothing could have been more effective in restoring order or in concerting measures for the general good; and the Saint gave his attention to them straightway and unremittingly. Charles Martel had died in 741, recommending himself to his prayers. Boniface knew how to make use of this and of the favour he enjoyed with Carloman and Pepin, to convene provincial councils in Austrasia and Neustria under his own presidency between the years 742 and 744. Of these the most notable were those of Estennes in Hainault, and of Soissons. All the decisions framed by these synods were confirmed in a general council for the whole empire which met in the following year.

Then the Frankish Church saw all the abuses under which she had groaned redressed and removed in that council. Restitution, in part at least, was made of the goods taken in the spoliation of churches, abbeys, and bishoprics. The metropolitan hierarchy was re-established; councils were to meet annually to safeguard the purity of Faith and the morals of the clergy. Clerics were forbidden, under penalty of interdict, to bear arms, go to war, or wear secular dress. All jurisdiction was withheld from wandering bishops and priests until such time as their credentials had been looked into by a synod. Lastly, in a document called *Indiculus superstitionum*, and which forms a kind of syllabus of the religious errors of the eighth century, were grouped and banned the most obviously dangerous of the prevalent superstitions and pagan practices.

In 747, Boniface assembled a last general council of the Frankish empire. This was the crowning act of his work

of reorganisation, for in that assembly the bishops not only solemnly ratified and confirmed all the decisions of previous councils, but they put their signature to a profession of faith, attesting their union with the Church of Rome and their determination to abide by her decrees and to recognise her supremacy in all things.

FULDA.

The reform of the Frankish Church had been a record of success. Yet while he continued to preside over councils and to suggest salutary measures, Boniface did not rest on his oars. The errors and abuses which had come under his notice for condemnation made him realise more than ever the necessity of well-trained priests, men of solid learning and piety, if they were to have any real influence and his labours any good result. He wanted also to raise in some remote spot a monastery to supersede all the others in importance and serve as a perpetual seminary for the missions of Germany. The councils were over, which left him free to put his project into execution.

He despatched his favourite disciple, Sturm the Bavarian, to the centre of Germany to find a suitable site in the ancient forest of Buchonia, which forms the natural frontier between Thuringia and Hesse. After much exploring Sturm came on a spot which seemed to be in every particular what his master wanted. This was a valley in the midst of the forest, encircled by the river Fulda, surrounded on all sides by well-wooded hills sloping gently to the water. Boniface found no difficulty in inducing Charlemagne to give him a grant of this land, and Sturm entered into possession at once. He began the erection of a monastery and a church to be dedicated to our Saviour. The monks chanted their psalms and prayed as they raised the walls of their new dwelling. The Saint came there from time to time to stimulate them

by his presence and to pass a whole week in retreat and the study of the Scriptures. He used to stay in a hermitage on a neighbouring hill, which has since been called the Bishop's Mountain. Each year he was wont to retire there to rest from his labours and to renew his spirit in this solitude, while he strove to stimulate his brethren to the love and practice of all monastic virtues. Boniface was determined that regular observance in this monastery should be exemplary; and, for this end, he sent the faithful Sturm, at the very beginning of the new foundation, into Italy, to study monastic observance in Rome and at Monte Cassino. This special training, Sturm's virtue, and Boniface's renown made the reputation of Fulda, so that even in the lifetime of its first abbot it had 400 monks within its walls.

We find the holy founder writing to Pope Zachary: "In the midst of the nations I have evangelised, I have built a monastery in a spacious solitude and placed in it monks who live under the Rule of St. Benedict; they are religious of the strict observance, who abstain from wine and fermented drink, keep no serfs, and to whom the labour of their own hands sufficeth. I have been given possession of the place by pious and God-fearing men. Especially do I owe it to Carloman, then prince of the Franks, and I have dedicated it to the Holy Redeemer. There, with the approval of Your Holiness, I intend to seek, every year, a few days' rest for my body enfeebled by age, and there I wish to be buried. The four nations to whom, by the grace of God, I have preached the Gospel,[1] live in the surrounding districts; I could still, aided by your prayers, be useful to them while I live.[2]

"The work," remarks M. Kurth, "answered to the high

[1] The Franks, the Hessians, the Thuringians and the Bavarians.
[2] Op. cit., 115.

hopes of its founder, and became a powerful source of religious and intellectual life, which permeated all Germany. Letters and arts flourished there under the auspices of religion. German erudition had there its earliest representatives. Agriculture transformed the whole countryside, and clearing and improvement of the land were carried out on a colossal scale. Fulda seemed to epitomise the entire work of the civilising of Germany."[1]

ARCHBISHOP OF MAYENCE: LAST MISSION TO FRISIA.

Boniface had succeeded so far in all he undertook, his first Mission to Frisia alone excepted. The Christianisation of Germany and the reform of the Frankish Church had presented formidable obstacles, but both had eventually been crowned with success. To perfect the former there only remained to restore metropolitan jurisdiction, as had been already done in Gaul. Although he had been archbishop some thirteen years and was clothed with the pallium, he had no fixed See. Acting on the advice of the Sovereign Pontiffs he had left himself open to the calls of his vast archdiocese and given himself freely to the general good of the greater number. Now that the Church of Germany was organised Boniface considered the time had come to complete the hierarchy by establishing a metropolitan See. He thought to fix it at Cologne, and the death of the bishop of that town in 745 seemed to give him an opportunity. Before the end of that year he even wrote to Pope Zachary that, with the consent of Pepin and Carloman, he had been recognised metropolitan of Cologne by the Frankish episcopate. He had not suspected that the bishops and prevaricating priests whom he had followed up so firmly in the councils would raise opposition. They seized the oppor-

[1] Op. cit., 117.

tunity for their revenge by thwarting his plans, and had Mayence assigned to him instead of Cologne.

This defeat was all the more trying to Boniface because the same opposition had led in Gaul to the disappearance of the archiepiscopal Sees of Sens and Rheims. Deprived of the support on which he had reckoned, the great archbishop's work nevertheless prevailed, and with a complete hierarchy in both countries, because Rouen remained metropolitan city for Gaul and Mayence became that of Germany. This time, however, the drawback to the consolidation of his work for Germany came more from infirmities of increasing age than from anything else. With his characteristic disinterestedness he notified the fact to Pope Zachary, and with his approval nominated Lull, his disciple, coadjutor with right of succession; and until he could retire and entrust to him the entire management, he carefully initiated him into the direction and administration of the archdiocese.

Did Boniface, then a septuagenarian, seek a well-earned rest in thus preparing the way for his resignation of the metropolitan See of Mayence? After the evangelisation of Germany, the reform of the Frankish Church and the foundation of Fulda, he might well have done so. Far from seeking rest, however, he was striving to bring about the realisation of a dream of his earlier days, which circumstances had hitherto prevented. Since he could not get a hearing from the fanatic Saxons who burned and pulled down the churches on their frontiers, he would devote the last remnant of his failing strength to that glorious missionary life which he had formerly led with St. Willibrord among the Frisians. The Catholic Faith was firmly rooted in the districts of the interior around the Utrecht diocese, but the region of the Zuyderzee still remained absolutely pagan. To win this people to Christianity, to make Friesland

Catholic, to reap in one last campaign the harvest he had sown and tended in his younger years: these were the last earthly projects of the venerable prelate.

On the eve of this expedition Boniface seemed to have a presentiment of approaching death. His parting instructions to Lull give the warning to his faithful disciple: "I go," he said, "for I cannot relinquish this journey to which I have so long looked forward. My last hour is not far off: soon freed from this prison of the body, I shall go to reap an eternal recompense. Do you, my son, finish the churches which are being built in Thuringia; strive to lead back the peoples from the errors into which they have strayed; put the finishing touches to the Basilica of Fulda, and have my body conveyed there when the weary pilgrimage of this life is ended." And he added: "Thou shalt put into my luggage a box of books, and in this box my winding-sheet."[1]

A few days after with fifty priests and clerics the Saint embarked and went down the Rhine. It was spring-time of the year 754. From Utrecht Boniface opened the campaign, traversing the low marshy swamps of Friesland, preaching on the way, throwing down idols and raising in their stead Christian sanctuaries. Winter set in; the campaign was resumed the following spring. When crossing Lake Almaere Boniface found himself in the true country of his mission, "a land crossed by water courses and canals, along which sailed the Saint's little flotilla laden with his packs and books."[2] The beginning of the campaign was a success. Pagans were converted and baptised in great numbers. Boniface had made an appointment to meet them and administer confirmation at Dokkum, situated at the extreme north of Friesland. It was in the first days of June, 755; Boniface and his company had landed and

[1] Willibald, ch. 8. [2] Kurth, *St. Boniface*, ch. 9.

erected tents for the reception of the neophytes. But the success of the gospel-preaching had roused the inhabitants of those parts to exasperation, and instead of the peaceful recruits whom the missioner expected, a horde of fanatics lay in ambush.

While awaiting his neophytes he had been reading a book, which is thought to have been St. Ambrose's treatise on the advantage of death. The savages made a sudden onslaught, and the Saint's companions, taken by surprise, would have resisted; but calling his clerics around him he besought them to desist from strife and not to forfeit the recompense that martyrdom brings with it. He was one of the first to fall under the assassin's knife; and, if we are to take the word of an eye-witness, the Saint, before receiving the fatal stroke, raised instinctively above his head in self-defence the book that he had been reading.[1] With one stroke the sword cleft the book and the master's head, which fell crowned with the glorious and blood-red crown of all his companions immolated with him.

Immediately the Christians of Friesland became aware of the crime, they hastened to avenge the death of their Apostle and to gather up his venerated remains. The bodies of his companions were interred on the scene of their martyrdom; his was conveyed to Utrecht, where the inhabitants would have wished to have it placed in their cathedral. Already Lull had sent his messengers to claim the precious relics for Mayence. When the body was brought there, mindful of the last injunctions of his master, he had it transported to Fulda, where the Saint entered in triumphal procession, escorted by crowds of people assembled from all parts to assist at the translation.

[1] *Acta Sanct.*, Iun. i, 480. There is preserved, at the present day, in the Library of Fulda, a volume, bound in wood and stained with blood, and according to tradition it is the very book which the Saint held.

Thus had lived and died St. Boniface, a perfect type and model of the monk-missioner, formed by years of monastic life to an interior life, to the virtues of abnegation and self-sacrifice, and consequently well fitted to extend Christ's kingdom, without letting himself be swayed by any mere human considerations. It is astonishing, as this life proves, how much good fidelity to a monastic vocation can procure for the world, and still more so if we reflect that even after the lapse of so many centuries his apostolate is still yielding its fruits.

If we only look at Germany, as it was his especial field of apostolate, he is still the inspiration of all its endeavours —clubs, journals, reviews—directed to propagate Catholic teaching.

"His tomb," says M. Kurth, "is to this day the religious centre of Germany, and the country has no more national shrine. There year by year the Prussian bishops meet in conference, to find in his example a lesson and a stimulant. His name is the greatest in the Church Catholic in that country: it symbolises its glory and fecundity."[1]

Spread of the Order over Northern Europe.

In the case of England we showed what the Benedictine Order did from the seventh century for the religious, social, and intellectual advancement of the people. Elsewhere, in St. Boniface we have a type of those monk-missioners who strove to evangelise Northern Europe, which gives us an insight into the men and their work. To keep this account within the limits of a summary, we shall take up again the thread of Benedictine history in broad outline and general periods.

The work of evangelisation to which primarily St. Augustine and his companions in England, St. Boniface in Ger-

[1] Op. cit., 172.

many, and St. Willibrord in Friesland, gave themselves, was taken up about the same time and carried through by other sons of St. Benedict all over Northern Europe. "There was not a country, however remote or inaccessible," says Cardinal Gasquet[1] referring to these regions of the North, "that has not benefited by their ministry. Monk-missioners from England, that field of apostolate reserved to St. Benedict, were to convert Denmark and Sweden —which had for their first apostle St. Anschar—and by them Norway, Iceland and Greenland would come to the knowledge of the truth." In Germany, too, where St. Boniface had been preceded in Thuringia by St. Chilian, in Bavaria by St. Rupert and St. Corbinian, his work was continued by a whole legion of disciples and monks trained by him, such as, to mention only the names of the canonised, Burchard, Sturm, Winnibald and Willibald. In the region afterwards called Belgium is seen yet another constellation of Benedictine saints: St. Amand, St. Ghislain, St. Remacle, St. Ursmer, St. Trond, to cite only the best known, devoted their lives to the same apostolate.

During this period the Benedictine Rule was coming into such prominence in Gaul—it was soon to displace the rule of St. Columbanus first at Luxeuil, then in the dependent houses—that some account of the origin and development of Western monachism, and the reasons for the preponderance of St. Benedict's rule from the eighth century onwards, will not be out of place here.

Origin and Development of Western Monachism.

Like Christianity, of which it is the perfect expression, monachism came from the East, and existed in the West long before the day of St. Benedict. Its chief promoter had been St. Athanasius, who fled before the persecuting

[1] Gasquet, *A Sketch*, etc.

Arians from Alexandria to Rome, and there made known the life of St. Anthony and the monks of the Thebaid. Thus did heresy help to spread abroad and propagate this most perfect form of Christian life, and, what is still more striking, as Dom Besse remarks:[1] "This was not the only time that Arianism, by exiling the defenders of orthodoxy, caused intercourse between East and West which led to like happy results. We meet with the converse in the case of St. Hilary of Poitiers and St. Eusebius of Vercelli; both regained their Sees after having been able to witness the remarkable influence of religious life during their exile in the East. On their return they became its zealous propagators, St. Hilary by founding Ligugé, and St. Eusebius at Vercelli by the adoption of this regular life for himself and his clergy. The other great doctors of the Latin Church, St. Ambrose, St. Augustine, and St. Jerome, were not less enthusiastic in recommending it and making themselves its apostles, in Italy, Africa, and Palestine. With such upholders religious life was bound to spread rapidly. Two other causes furthered its propagation; emigration to the East, occasioned by the irruptions of the barbarians, and visits to the Holy Places and the Egyptian solitaries suggested to the élite of the society of that day by the advice and example of St. Jerome, Rufinus and Cassian."

Dom Besse gives another reason of the attraction felt towards religious life at this time: "The blood of martyrs no longer flowed as in the days of persecution. Heroism was still necessary to Christianity. Souls which felt its impulse sought the way of solitude, where the example of St. Anthony and his rivals encouraged them to self-immolation by a life of sacrifice."[2]

Some dates will show more clearly this coincidence between the fast-growing popularity of the monastic life in

[1] Cf. Besse, *D'ou vieunent les moines*, 48. [2] Ib.

the West and the facts here mentioned. Peace was given to the Church by Constantine in 313; but she had long to struggle against her enemies from within, particularly the Arians. Persecuted by them, St. Athanasius came to seek a refuge in Rome in 340, and about the same time St. Hilary and St. Eusebius returned from exile to their Sees of Poitiers and Vercelli. Some years later we find religious life first established at Vercelli; then about 360 at Ligugé, and a little later at Marmoutiers, whence it was to be brought to Ireland by St. Patrick.

In the first half of the fifth century Cassian founded the monastery of St. Victor at Marseilles, where a number of monks lived under his direction. About the same time St. Honoratus built the famous abbey of Lerins near by, and in the Jura Alps St. Romain and St. Lupicinus organised the great monasteries, Condat, Leuconne and Baume.

Religious life from that moment flourished, and yet the birth of St. Benedict did not take place until 480; but the monasteries were comparatively few though undoubtedly important. In the sixth century they multiplied rapidly in Italy and Gaul. In the North, St. Comgall drew thousands of monks to Bangor, and at Iona St. Columbanus gathered round him the future apostles of the Highlands. St. Ferreol gave a Rule to the monks of the cathedral of Uzès, and St. Cæsarius was legislating for the monastery of his sister, Cæsaria.

All these foundations and the still more important one of Luxeuil, founded by St. Columbanus in the Vosges at the end of the sixth century, were independent of the Rule of St. Benedict. The Rules observed in these monasteries were either written by their founders, like St. Ferreol, St. Cæsarius or St. Columbanus, or more often still were an amalgamation of the Rules of the Fathers of the desert and local customs and traditions.

The Rule of St. Benedict Supplants Other Rules.

The Rule of St. Benedict, written by the holy patriarch at Monte Cassino, was at first practised only at Subiaco and the neighbouring monasteries. Its widespread adoption was due to St. Gregory the Great, and to the prestige which accrued to the whole Order from his elevation to the pontifical throne. Moreover, his despatch of St. Augustine to England in 596, and the adoption of the Holy Rule by Luxeuil and its dependent houses, were powerful aids to this diffusion, which went on growing apace during all the eighth century.

In a small work on the Benedictines in France[1] Dom Besse has ably set forth the causes to which the prosperity of the monasteries and their rising influence at this period are due: "The Gallo-Romans, among whom religious life had been long before introduced, profoundly moved by the passing of a world-power, were the first to enter. Barbarians, French, Burgundians, in the first fervour of their new faith, followed. But, as may be supposed, with all the goodwill shown there was much to be altered in these first monastic houses. No sooner did the Benedictine Rule become known in France, than it tended to supplant everywhere Rules already followed."

In the eighth century this was an accomplished fact. For the time being the Rule of St. Benedict was generally observed side by side with earlier Rules. The rough temper of the converted barbarians had need of more rigorous prescriptions than those of the legislator of Monte Cassino. It would even seem that the Rule imported from Ireland to Luxeuil by St. Columbanus was better suited to the temperament of those he had to govern. The fusion of the two elements, Celtic and Latin, was not without its advantages

[1] *Les Bénédictins en France.*

for monachism. It gave the monks the energy needed to master and manage the sons of barbarians and to weld into one Christian civilisation all that was then fluctuating in old Gaul.

Once the fusion was effected to the mutual gain of both races, the Rule of St. Benedict came into its own. Its author, at once a Roman, a genius, a Saint, one in whom moral strength was joined to all the qualifications of a race of conquerors and civilisers, knew how to give to his work an extraordinary faculty for absorption and adaptation.

The ascendancy of the Holy Rule made itself more and more felt as time went on. Gradually it supplanted and replaced the earlier Rules, more especially after its adoption and propagation by Luxeuil. Its hegemony was recognised and approved in the eighth century by the Councils of Soissons, Estinnes, and Cliff, which made it obligatory in all the Gaulish, German and British monasteries. So exclusively was it followed in all the monasteries of the empire in the time of Charlemagne that he expressed great surprise one day on learning that there had been monastic Rules before the Benedictine Rule and monasteries in the West before the time of St. Benedict.

The Saracens.

From the despatch of St. Augustine to England by St. Gregory at the close of the sixth century until the middle of the eighth, the progress of the Benedictine Order across Northern Europe was almost uninterrupted. We must make a distinction, however; whereas in Gaul the Benedictine Rule generally ousted primitive Rules, in Germany and in the greater part of England the Benedictine Code was from the first the only one.

Towards the middle of the eighth century the progress of monastic influence met with a sudden check. The Arabs,

once become masters of Spain, advanced to the Rhone Valley pillaging and burning towns and monasteries as they went. They pushed on as far as Poitiers, where they were met and repulsed by Charles Martel in 732. Thus did he render a signal service to Christianity, but lessened its value by distributing Church and monastic property to his soldiers.

We saw in the life of St. Boniface the disorders which resulted from this seizure, and that Charles Martel's sons, Carloman and Pepin the Short, tried to remedy them by seconding the reforms Boniface proposed to carry out in the Frankish Church. Charlemagne, who succeeded them, did even more to further the religious revival. The monasteries stood in the midst of the nations they had converted, strongholds of civilisation and culture; and Charles was quick to see of what utility the monks might be to him in consolidating the vast Christian Empire he wanted to found.

Thus did the great Emperor and the sons of St. Benedict mutually and repeatedly assist each other. His ablest and best co-operators were abbots, or bishops who had been monks, St. Adelard and St. Angilbert among others, and his historian Eginhard. It was with the help of Alcuin, summoned from England, that he succeeded in raising the standard of education and in making it general throughout the Empire by creating and supporting cathedral and claustral schools. While great monks, such as those mentioned, were helping him in the government and administration of the kingdom and in the new work of the organisation of teaching, others, notably St. Willibald, St. Suithbert and St. Ludger, were preparing the way for the conquest of new territories for him by continuing the conversion of Friesland and Germany. St. Benedict of Aniane also was doing much for the religious revival, and with the support of Charles and Louis the Pious, he suc-

ceeded in restoring monastic discipline even in places where it had become most relaxed.[1]

The first year of the reign of Louis the Pious saw a council of abbots assemble at Aix-la-Chapelle (817) to execute this reform. Benedict of Aniane presided and carried through measures which were designed to prepare the way for the monastic revival. In acknowledgment of his services the Emperor built for him the famous abbey of Cornelimünster near Aix-la-Chapelle. Benedict of Aniane continued his work of reform by drawing up a "Concord of Rules" which, with the Council of Aix-la-Chapelle, was the first step towards that grouping together of monastic communities to be first realised by Cluny. The time was, however, not yet ripe for this new departure.

The Normans.

A widespread scourge even more terrible than the Saracen invasion loomed over Church, monastic system, and civilisation in the ninth century. In Spain, France, England, Germany, and Italy the scarcely yet organised Christian states were attacked from all sides by the barbarians. Louis the Pious succeeded in repulsing the Avars from Germany, but terrible were the ravages worked by the Moors in Spain, the Saracens in Italy, the Danes in England, and, most of all, by the Normans throughout all that country which lies between the mouth of the Elbe and Spain.

These daring adventurers of Scandinavian origin during the greater part of the ninth century and even into the tenth established themselves at the mouths of all the rivers of France and the Low Countries. They knew they had nothing to fear from the weak successors of Charlemagne,

[1] On St. Benedict of Aniane cf. Nicolai, *Der hl. Benedikt, Gründer von Aniane.* Fernand Baumes, *La vie de St. Benoit d'Aniane* (Coll. Science et religion).

and, taking advantage of the intestine quarrels which enervated the power of kings and barons, they advanced unhindered up the rivers in their light barks, devastating every place they passed. Their audacity would scarce be credible to-day, had not the chronicles of the time put their exploits on record. During the reigns of Louis the Pious and of Charles the Bald the plunderers bore down on Utrecht, Nantes, Tours, and Amboise, Saintes and Bordeaux, and sacked or burned them, unless a large ransom were forthcoming. Tournai, Cambrai, Arras, Amiens and Corbie met with a like fate, under Louis III; and Maastricht, Liège, Bonn and Cologne suffered in their turn under the weak and incompetent Charles the Fat.

These incursions only came to an end in 911 with the concession by Charles the Simple of all the country since called Normandy to Rollo, on the sole condition that he would become a Christian and swear fealty to the French king.

From the fate meted out to the towns, it may be gathered how critical a time was this latter half of the ninth century for the monastic system. Abbeys were pillaged and burned wholesale, and their inmates martyred. Those who managed to escape found a refuge wherever they could, bearing with them as a precious burden the relics of the Saints and their most valuable manuscripts, and they did their best to continue their monastic life, to which these vicissitudes were almost fatal.

CHAPTER III

MONASTIC REFORM

Cluny; St. Gregory VII; St. Anselm.

When monastic history is placed in its proper setting, one understands the reason of the reforms that religious life has seen, and that the fault was not always to be im-

puted to the monks. Following on the disorders arising from the forced intrusion of Charles Martel's fighting men into bishoprics and abbeys in the eighth century, we have watched the reform brought about by St. Boniface first of all, and then, at a later time, by the energetic reorganiser, St. Benedict of Aniane.

History repeats itself. Each time monastic life is thrown out of gear the same phenomenon recurs. The period of disorder having run its course, a monk arises who makes of his monastery a model of regular observance and a well-spring of spiritual life, and this new influence is soon felt by all the monasteries in the country. This was the case in the tenth century after the cessation of the disturbances caused in Northern Europe by Danish and Norman invasions and by the dismemberment of Charlemagne's empire.

Cluny.[1]

In 910, Bernon, Abbot of Gigny, helped by William, Duke of Aquitaine, founded Cluny Abbey in Burgundy, whence the monastic reform was to spread throughout Europe. Many were the causes which combined to make the influence of this new monastery telling and widespread. There was in the first place the sanctity of the first abbots who ruled it. Blessed Bernon, who died in 928, was succeeded by four Saints: St. Odo, St. Mayeul, St. Odilo and St. Hugh.

[1] On Cluny cf. Lorain, *Essai historique sur l'abbaye de Cluny ;* Pignot, *Histoire de l'abbaye de Cluny depuis la fondation de l'abbaye jusqu'à la mort de Pierre le Vénérable* (1009-1157), 3 vols.; Cucherat, *Cluny au XI^e siècle, son influence religieuse, intellectuelle et politique ;* Sackur, *Die Cluniacenser in ihrer kirchlichen und allgemein geschichtlichen Wirksamkeit bis zur Mitte des* 11, *Jahrhunderts ;* U. Berlière, *Cluny, son action religieuse et sociale* in "*Rev. Bénéd.,*" 1892, ix, 465-471, 498-508. See also the articles by Cabrol on the Millennium of Cluny, *Études,* Août, 1910; E. Babelon, *Rev. hebdom.,* Oct., 1910; Louis Bruel, *Album historique et archéologique.*

These four abbots each lived to a great age; the last two were elected very young, and thus the abbey was for nearly two centuries under the government of Saints, and the discipline which prevailed was justly praised by all contemporaries. What is more, these four Saints were perfect monks, organisers, and men born to govern, with deep insight into the needs of their times. They saw feudalism set itself up on all sides, and the hitherto defenceless peasants group themselves around the strong castles. The increasing numbers of these strongholds throughout the country made the irruptions of the barbarians wellnigh impossible. The success of the Cluniac observance and the frequency of the demand of other monasteries for affiliation to it suggested the idea of an aggregation of monasteries around the powerful Burgundian abbey that St. Odo was the first to carry out.[1] These abbeys would henceforth be dependent on Cluny, not having abbots of their own but priors dependent on Cluny, the statutes, regulations, customs, and discipline of which they would bind themselves to follow. There was excess of centralisation in this new system, and it diverged from the spirit of the Benedictine Rule which supposes each monastery to form a distinct family under the authority of an abbot. This excessive centralisation may, however, have been necessitated at the moment by the feudal system planting itself everywhere. However that may be, certain it is that this system of a federation of monasteries with Cluny gave the best results for the Church and monasticism for nigh two hundred years. Whilst it propagated the then exemplary Cluniac observance, it caused the monastic virtues to flourish in all the affiliated monasteries up and down Europe. Under St. Odo's successors the Order reached the apogee of its social and religious influence; and even as it aided the Capets

[1] Cf. du Bourg, *St. Odon*, in *Les Saints*.

to form France to national unity, so it was the faithful auxiliary of the Popes in their heroic efforts for the safeguarding of the Church's purity and independence.

St. Mayeul, the second of Cluny's great abbots, was held in such veneration throughout Christendom for his moral worth and skill in the art of government, that at one time there was a question of his being raised to the papacy.[1] He rejected all honours to give himself absolutely to carrying out the Cluniac reform, and the intimacy which he formed with Otho the Great, Otho II, and the Empress Adelaide materially helped him to propagate it in Germany. In France and Italy, owing to him, the reform was established in the great abbeys of Marmoutiers, St. Germain, St. Maur-des-Fossés, and at Lerins, St. Apollinaris near Ravenna, and at St. Saviour in Pavia. On the pressing instance of Hugh Capet he set out in his eightieth year to reform the abbey of St. Denis, but death awaited him at the priory of Souvigny, in 994.

St. Odilo, his successor, did even more to extend the influence of Cluny.[2] A friend of King Robert, the Empress Adelaide, and the Emperor Henry III, he made use of the influence he had with the great lords and princes of the time to induce them to adopt the "Truce of God." Established by the Church and sanctioned by princes, this salutary institution, which forbade all armed attack from Wednesday evening to Monday morning, proved a signal benefit in those troublous times of private warfare.

Not less solicitous to help the departed than the living, St. Odilo obtained permission from the Holy See to introduce a solemn commemoration of all the faithful departed into his monastery. It is this celebration, fixed by him for

[1] Cf. Ogerdias, *Hist. de St. Mayeul.*

[2] Cf. Abbé Jardet, *St. Odilon de Cluny. Sa vie, son temps, ses œuvres.*

November 2, which has passed from Cluny into the Universal Church under the name of "All Souls' Day." Indeed, charity would seem to have been the virtue most dear to the saintly abbot. During the Burgundian famine in 1030, he not only distributed the stores of the monastery, but even sold the church ornaments for the benefit of the needy. Austere and rigorous to himself, he was so compassionate in his dealings with others that people accused him of being too lenient: "If I am to be condemned," he said, "I had rather it were for too much mercy, than for too much harshness."

The holy abbot had professed and trained with great care the monk destined to succeed him and to bring the abbey to the apogee of its influence. Hugh de Sémur had come as a boy to Cluny, was ordained priest at twenty, and gave proofs from his first entrance into the monastery of virtue so steadfast, intellect so keen, wisdom and prudence so much beyond the ordinary, that no one was surprised when he was made "grand prior" almost immediately after his ordination. Initiated into the business and government of the abbey by St. Odilo himself, Hugh found himself, notwithstanding his years, well prepared for the abbatial charge, so weighty in its prerogatives, which he was to exercise for more than threescore years.[1]

A temporal prince, wielding all the rights of suzerainty, of high and petty justice, with the privilege of coining money, the Lord Abbot of Cluny was second only to the Pope himself in spirituals. Under St. Hugh the jurisdiction of Cluny extended to 314 monasteries, the possessions of which if brought together would equal a kingdom. Over and above this temporal power, Hugh enjoyed, owing to his own great virtue, an influence and a fame surpassing those of any of his predecessors. The Emperor of Germany,

[1] Cf. L'Huillier, *Vie de St. Hugues, Abbé de Cluny.*

the King of Hungary, the Duke of Burgundy, had each recourse in turn to him as arbitrator. He presided over six councils in France as Apostolic Legate. Popes Leo IX, Victor II, Stephen X, Nicholas II, Alexander II, rivalled each other in marks of favour to him, always looking about for new and greater privileges wherewith to enrich his abbey. When the church of Cluny, the largest in the world after St. Peter's, was built, Pope Urban II went there himself to consecrate the High Altar, and took the holy abbot with him to the council which was to usher in the first crusade. As has been written, "Cluny seemed at this moment like a second Rome."[1] Gelasius II came there to die, the cardinals there elected his successor, and the Sovereign Pontiffs ordained that a copy of the chief acts of the Holy See should be laid up in the abbey archives.

To maintain the exemplary observance which had been and was still the source of Cluny's greatness in the world, St. Hugh had the Cluniac Constitutions drawn up; and as a help to the abbots in the exercise of their charge, he instituted general chapters in which the priors and delegates could meet to discuss questions bearing on the interests of the Order.

One might incline to the belief that the Church of the day must have reflected the purity of the monastic life, taking into consideration this power so well adjusted, these abbeys distributed throughout all Europe and even to the Holy Land, and above all the virtues of the four founders of Cluny. These virtues were especially love of the monastic life, which made them prefer their abbatial charge to all the honours offered them elsewhere; their spirit of prayer; their zeal for discipline and observance, which made them live poorly in the midst of great wealth disbursed for the relief of the poor or for the needs of the Church, and which

[1] Dom Berengier, *Tabl. Hist.*, 33.

made St. Hugh retrench nothing of his fastings and watchings even in his eightieth year.

The state of the Church was far from being a reflection of the purity of the monastic life; she had three great evils to contend with, which nearly brought about her utter ruin: simony, the incontinence of the clergy, and the encroachments of the secular power. The last of these evils is known to us only too well; the Church at every period of her history has had a hard battle to maintain her independence in the face of the secular power. But to-day we can scarce imagine the state of things existing at a period when priests had concubines and made a traffic of ecclesiastical offices and the Sacraments.

This is only one of the results of secular powers meddling with ecclesiastical affairs. In the Middle Ages there were emperors and princes who arrogated to themselves the right of disposing of offices and benefices in the Church and introduced unworthy candidates into the episcopate. These, again, did not scruple to confer orders on their creatures and to traffic in holy things. The Emperors of Germany and, at certain troubled times in the tenth century, the counts of Tusculum, took upon themselves not only to name bishops, but even the Sovereign Pontiff. With the Church's life thus tainted in its very source, what wonder if those tenth and eleventh centuries, so glorious for monasticism, were marked by great disorders among the secular clergy.

It is no exaggeration to say that during these two centuries the Church's life seems to have withdrawn into and confined itself within the Order of St. Benedict. For close on a century, dating from the pontificate of Pope St. Leo IX, all the Popes who set themselves to fight for the independence of the Church and put an end to scandals are Benedictines. And the greatest of these, the one chosen

by God's Providence to deliver and purify His Church, was taught, trained, befriended, and called to the government of the Church by monks. In the cloister he was known as Hildebrand, and as Gregory VII on the pontifical throne.

St. Gregory VII.[1]

A monk at Rome first of all, and disciple of the learned Benedictine Archbishop Laurence of Amalfi, employed in the diplomatic service of Gregory VI, Hildebrand followed the Pope into exile to France, where he joined St. Hugh. After Gregory's death he happened to be at Cluny at the same time as Leo IX, whose election as Pope Henry III had just secured at Worms by an abuse of power. From this meeting dates the rise and influence of Gregory in the Church. In their first interview he succeeded in convincing the Pope of the nullity of his investiture and the necessity of his submitting to a new election in Rome. Yielding to Hildebrand's entreaties Leo consented to lay aside the pontifical insignia and to present himself at the court of Rome in the poor garb of a pilgrim, but on the condition that Hildebrand should go with him. When the election was carried out canonically, he named Hildebrand abbot of St. Paul-without-the-Walls, and created him cardinal.

Then appeared a whole series of decrees against the sale of benefices and the marriage of priests, and these decrees promulgated by Councils on both sides of the Alps showed a determination to tolerate no abuses of this kind, and to extirpate them from the Church with unflinching firmness. To form an idea of the boldness of this initiative, and to judge of the enormity of the evils under which the Church

[1] Montalembert, *St. Grégoire VII, moine et Pape*, and *The Monks of the West*, v, 237-455; Villemain, *Histoire de Grégoire VII*, 2 vols.; Delarc, *St. Grégoire VII et la réforme de l'Église au XI^e siècle*, 3 vols.; W. Martens, *St. Gregor VII, sein Leben und sein Wirken*.

was being crushed, it suffices to mention that, some years later, when Hildebrand, as Gregory VII, renewed these salutary decrees, only two out of the forty bishops composing the German episcopate dared to publish them.

In the time of Louis IX the condition of things in France was not much better, and to work a change nothing less was needed than the wonderful miracle which took place at the Council of Lyons during the pontificate of Victor II. We shall give Montalembert's version of it.[1] The new Pope, he writes, at the peril of his life conformed his conduct to Hildebrand's counsels, and carried on the war waged by his predecessors against simoniacal bishops and married priests. Hildebrand had been despatched as legate to France and lost no time in assembling a council in the province of Lyons. In this he straightway deposed six bishops convicted of the sin which, at that time, was considered the sin against the Holy Ghost. The archbishop of Embrun was accused of the same offence; but as he had suborned his accusers, no one could be found to give evidence against him. Then Hildebrand ordered the prelate to repeat aloud: "Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost." The archbishop got as far as "Glory be to the Father, and to the Son," but in spite of all his efforts could not pronounce "and to the Holy Ghost." Seeing himself convicted by God's judgment, the archbishop acknowledged his sin and submitted to deposition. This precedent made so profound an impression on the Church of France, that forty-five bishops and twenty-seven prelates of lesser rank owned themselves guilty of simony and resigned their dignities. It was a master stroke. The confidence with which Hildebrand was treated under St. Leo IX and Victor II only increased in the reigns of Stephen X, Nicholas II, and Alexander II, and the campaign inaugur-

[1] *St. Grégoire VII*, 381.

ated for redressing the evils in the Church was pursued with ever-increasing vigour. In the reign of Nicholas II Hildebrand had a solemn proclamation made from the Lateran palace of the famous decree of 1059, according to which for all future time the Pope was to be elected by the cardinals with the approbation of the Roman clergy and people. If the electors could not proceed with freedom in Rome, they were entitled to withdraw to any other place; and, on the other hand, every Pope elected or enthroned contrary to these prescriptions was thereby declared anathema.

This decree ensured the absolute independence of the Church in the election of Popes, and it has remained, with some slight modifications, in force to our own day. The principle once laid down, Hildebrand did not fear to put it into execution, notwithstanding the objections of the German Court, and on the death of Nicholas II had the election of his successor carried out according to the new rules. Then was elected Anselm of Badagio, Bishop of Lucca, formerly a disciple of Lanfranc at Bec, and one who, as legate in Lombardy, had distinguished himself by his zeal against simony. In opposition to this new Pope, who was esteemed by all and took the name of Alexander II, the German Court tried to set up a married and simoniacal bishop, but without success. When Alexander II died, Hildebrand, who had already for twenty-five years directed the affairs of the Church, was proclaimed by acclamation, and crowned as Gregory VII.

Montalembert has shown that to consider Gregory VII as a statesman above all else would be a great mistake. That he was a statesman and a great one, no one can deny; circumstances and his position obliged him to turn his genius to the management of public affairs. But, as the Church declared in canonising him, he was a Saint; and as he had

received in trust the Universal Church, he watched over the precious deposit with the love, solicitude, and zeal of one who was one day to give an account of it. His chief aim, and in this we see the true disciple of St. Benedict, was to be a faithful shepherd and to procure the salvation of the souls entrusted to him. "For," as Montalembert remarks, "the Catholic Church alone having the secret and the right of gaining souls, it is absolutely necessary that she should be free. It was necessary to free her in the person of her chiefs and ministers and to prevent the spiritual power from being enslaved to any human will. It was necessary, moreover, to wrest the deposit of doctrine, morals, and the Christian conscience from vile, grasping, and sullied hands." This is what this great Pope did in the twelve years of his pontificate.

The decrees already enacted had scarcely produced any result among the bishops and priests of Germany and Lombardy. Gregory would not stop at merely renewing them, but he threatened this time with anathema the simoniacal and married clergy who refused to amend or to put their affairs in order. The evil had come to such a pitch that many of these declared openly that they would rather give up the priesthood than marriage. This was the climax, and without regard for rank, place, or the outrages that these unworthy shepherds dared to offer him, he excommunicated the most guilty, and notably all those who had refused to publish the decrees. Never had the pontifical authority been wielded with such rigour, and the Christian world was astounded.

Yet such was the prestige of Gregory VII at this moment that no one ventured to resist him openly. Determined to make an end of the triple scourge which he had attacked for more than a quarter of a century, and convinced that

to eradicate the evil it was necessary to deprive secular princes of the right of nominating to abbeys and bishoprics, he had recourse to a decisive measure. Renewing first of all, in 1075, the anathema against the simoniacal and married clergy, Gregory extended the excommunication " to all the emperors, dukes, marquises, or counts, and to everyone holding secular power, who should presume to give investiture of a bishopric or abbey."

This left no loophole for equivocation, and princes who had arbitrarily taken on themselves right of investiture, notably the Emperor of Germany, had henceforth either to desist or to be in open revolt against the Holy See.

When the Emperor Henry IV needed the Pope's help to quell an insurrection of the Saxons, he made humble protestations of submission to Gregory's views, but once he believed himself again master in his own house he completely turned. False to all his engagements, he not only kept at court and chose as his counsellors recently excommunicated prelates, but, in defiance of the decrees of 1075, he conferred in his own right and on unworthy candidates the vacant sees of Spoleto, Fermo, and Milan, and in Germany, those of Bamberg and Cologne.

Thus opened the famous quarrel of Investitures, which belongs to the domain of general Church history, and of which we can only give the leading incidents here. Its first phase extends from the decree on investitures in 1075 to the public penance of Henry at Canossa; and Gregory VII certainly tried every possible means of conciliation: letters, exhortations, legates, proposals to modify clauses of the decree, before he summoned him to appear before him. Only when the decision of the synod of Worms, convened by the Emperor to depose the Pope, was made known to the latter, did he hurl the sentence of excommunication against the Emperor. Then followed the complete surrender of Henry

after the sentence, and his eagerness to reach Canossa and implore pardon in order to avert the election of a new Sovereign.

The second phase takes in the aggressive return of the Emperor to Rome, the flight and the death of Gregory at Salerno in the midst of his faithful Normans, and the death of Henry some years later at Liège, after his own sons had revolted against him.

The struggle was finally fought out during its last period between Henry V and the successors of Gregory VII, and was only brought to an end by the Concordat of Worms (1122), after which the election of bishops and abbots became free: the Pope was to confer investiture of spiritual power by the ring and crosier, the Emperor that of temporal power and royal endowment by the sceptre.

The Church came forth victorious from this heroic struggle of fifty years, and if Gregory did not live to see her triumph, he had at least the merit of preparing the way for it. "The history of great human issues," says Montalembert, "has no success on record more lasting or more complete than his. He had found the Church deteriorated within, enslaved without: at one and the same time he purified and freed her. Owing to him, incontinency, which had become a general rule among the clergy, disappeared, and that side so vulnerable among men who preach the truth has never since been attacked: he has made celibacy the immortal prerogative of the Catholic priesthood. Owing to him simony has been formally proscribed, and although it lurked under a hundred disguises it was in the end completely uprooted. Owing to him, but only after fifty years of warfare commenced by his decrees and directed by his spirit, the office of bishops, the very basis of ecclesiastical government, has ceased to be identified with lay investiture. Owing to him above all the rest,

independence in papal elections, set aside for two centuries by imperial usurpation, has been guaranteed for all time.

"From his pontificate the consent of the Emperors was not asked, nor even offered; to his successors he bequeathed a throne which they could mount without any human power stepping in to weaken and discredit their authority with a view to comprising it. He bequeathed to them what is more: that is, the glorious example of this superior and immortal might which persecutors never dream of, because it is veiled under the Church's weakness, but which survives all despots, which they never provoke with impunity, and which at the most unforeseen times ever appears most glorious, to confound their cunning and their violence."[1]

St. Anselm.[2]

We have lingered before this imposing figure of St. Gregory VII as we did before those of St. Gregory the Great and St. Boniface, and for the same reason. They were great Pontiffs and none the less typical monks, belonging entirely to God by their monastic profession, filled with our Lord's spirit, and because filled with this spirit wholly impassioned for the rights and interests of the Church.

Such was also, in the eleventh century, another son of St. Benedict recently proposed by Pius X to the bishops of the Catholic world as a model shepherd and teacher.[3] Anselm, born in 1034 in the picturesque city of Aosta, from

[1] Montalembert, *St. Grégoire VII.*

[2] Cf. Ragey, *Hist. de St. Anselme.* On the occasion of the eighth centenary of St. Anselm (1109-1909) a great number of works were published, and their names are to be found in the *Rivista storica Benedettina*, October 4, 1909. We call attention to the Encyclical of Pope Pius X on the Eighth Centenary of St. Anselm, April, 1909, as among the most important, and the special articles on St. Anselm in the *Revue philosophique* and the *Rivista storica Benedettina*, July, 1909. See also Rosa, S.J., *St. Anselm di Aosta*, i.

[3] Encycl., op. cit.

his earliest years showed a keen interest in study. He spent several years travelling through Burgundy, France, and Normandy in search of a master who would come up to his ideal. Drawn by the repute of Lanfranc to the school of Bec Abbey, he was captivated more by the monk's sanctity than by his skill in logic and grammar, and from the school he passed straight into the noviciate of the abbey.

In the studious and peaceful retreat of Bec, whither he had come to seek learning and had found his vocation, Anselm was to pass the thirty happiest years of his life. His natural qualifications and his virtues corresponded so perfectly to the ideal portrait that St. Benedict gives in his Rule of the monk and abbot, that it would be difficult to find another Saint who united the Benedictine qualities and virtues in such harmonious accord. Not many years after his entrance we find him filling responsible posts.

Assistant master of the school first of all, Anselm suddenly found himself prior and schoolmaster in Lanfranc's place, when that religious was raised by William of Normandy to the abbatial dignity in the monastery of St. Stephen at Caen. In this Chair at Bec, where he modestly aimed at nothing more than to adapt himself to the usual methods, his keen and penetrating intellect led him on to the discovery of new and incomparable ways of teaching philosophy and theology. His methods are so reliable that the Church ranks him among her doctors, and he will for all time be considered the originator of scholasticism and the precursor of St. Thomas and St. Bonaventure.

Not less grand was the part played by Anselm some years later in defence of the rights and liberty of the Church in England. Even after Lanfranc had been promoted to the archbishopric of Canterbury he and Anselm had kept in communication, and this latter, who had been chosen by the unanimous vote of the community abbot of Bec, found

himself in England on the death of his former master. Some saw in this coincidence an indication of Providence that Lanfranc's successor would be found in him. Anselm refused and protested, he knew how much he would have to suffer in defending the rights of the primatial see against the brutal cupidity of William Rufus. His representations were not listened to, and with the unanimous consent of king and bishops he was elected. Time proved that his gloomy forebodings were only too well founded. The fact was that the king had been at death's door at the moment of the election, and in mortal terror of damnation if he did not hasten to dispossess himself of the Canterbury revenues, seized at Lanfranc's death. On his recovery he forgot all his good resolutions; from an apparent protector he became an open persecutor, and, finding that all his efforts to make the archbishop yield to his pretensions and exactions were unavailing, he drove him from his see and banished him from the kingdom. Neither William's violence nor the cunning of his successor, Henry Beauclerc, could break the primate's resistance. Under an evenness and sweetness of temper, he hid the invincible firmness of a bishop conscious of his duty and his mission; and if some of the sixteen years which he governed the Church of England were years of exile spent in France and Italy, he was to return from them triumphant. Henry Beauclerc, yielding before Anselm's kindliness and grandeur of soul, not only reinstated him in his see and at the Council of London made a solemn renunciation of the right of investiture of bishops and abbots, but, during the last years of the holy archbishop's life, the king seconded him in all his works for the reform and reorganisation of the English Church.

It now remains for us to touch briefly on the invariable and ready assistance lent by the monastic order to Gregory

VII in the great struggle for the reform of the clergy and the enfranchisement of the Church, until the day when the cause was finally won. By its three vows of poverty, of chastity, and of obedience, it was the natural and irreconcilable adversary of the scourges which laid waste the Church. In this Investiture quarrel, whilst the inhabitants of the towns, the simoniacal clergy, and the excommunicated nobles were on the side of the Emperor, all the monasteries, with the exception of two in Germany, supported to the utmost of their power the rights of the Holy See. Those who stood by its claims to the end were monks: St. Peter Damian, who went all through France, Italy, and Germany hunting down simony and preaching reform; St. John Gualbert, who, for the same purpose founded Vallombrosa, and the heroic St. Peter Igneus, who, to prove his accusations against the simoniacal bishop of Florence, passed unsinged between two lines of burning faggots, and had the consolation of seeing that prelate repent and become a monk at Vallombrosa. Gregory VII, left without the support of any temporal power save that of the Countess Matilda in Tuscany and the Normans in Southern Italy, was nevertheless seconded by a whole network of abbeys throughout Europe, under Cluny in France, under Monte Cassino in Italy, and under Hirschau in Germany. These only awaited the word of command to carry through his every design, and eventually they secured the triumph of the cause.

Citeaux and St. Bernard.

The influence of religious Orders on the Church is always proportionate to their fervour, and the fervour of the abbeys depends often on that of the abbots. During the two centuries when Cluny was governed by Saints, its influence was always on the increase, but by the Abbot Ponce de Mergueil

it was reduced to a minimum. This successor of St. Hugh, active, enterprising, and energetic, had none of those supernatural qualities that St. Benedict expects to find in an abbot. Far from being, as were his predecessors, the first to practise the precepts of the Holy Rule and to "put the care of the souls committed to his keeping above all else," as St. Benedict recommends,[1] he considered that he was exempt from all observances by the fact of having much business to transact. Thus the charge of maintaining discipline devolved on the prior, for the abbot thought he went the best way to work to increase the prestige of Cluny when he gave his undivided attention to managing and adding to the property of the community. Unlike his predecessors again, in that he was nearly always out of the monastery, he went about, says Mabillon, with a retinue so superb that when he went to visit St. Bertin's monastery a hundred mules were needed to carry his luggage.[2]

The monks who had lived under St. Hugh were justly dismayed and scandalised by such conduct. They tried forbearance and protests without success, and then appealed to Callistus II for permission to elect a new abbot. This was granted, but the newly elected superior only lived a few months, and was succeeded by Peter the Venerable. The latter, who came when a small boy to Cluny as oblate and had been professed by St. Hugh, made a holy abbot. Once more regular observance was restored. As to the Abbot Ponce, he first feigned submission to the Pope's decision; then he forced an entrance into Cluny and tried to maintain his position there, and was eventually excommunicated by Innocent II. The piety of Peter the Venerable, his moderation, learning, and charity, soon got the better of prejudices roused by his predecessor's unworthy conduct against the abbey. Under his government it regained some

[1] *Reg.*, ch. 2. [2] Mab., *Annales*, v, 580.

of its former prestige, but it never again recovered the sway it had exercised for nearly two centuries, and which, in the twelfth century, passed over to the Order of Citeaux.

Citeaux.[1]

The Order of Citeaux, a new shoot issuing from the old Benedictine trunk in the last years of the eleventh century, had for founders St. Robert of Molesmes and the English St. Stephen Harding, and for propagator, St. Bernard. Born in 1027 at Troyes in Champagne, Robert became when still young a Benedictine at Moutiers-la-Celle, and was chosen prior almost on leaving the noviceship; some years later he was elected abbot of St. Michel de Tonnerre. The one object of his life was to bring back the monks to the strict observance of the Rule of St. Benedict, and he insisted on manual labour, which the Cluny monks had given up for study and for the liturgical offices. Seeing that he could not carry out his ideas at St. Michel, he went to the hermits of Colan, and with their aid built Molesmes, a poor little oratory within reach of a few cells made of tree trunks and branches interlaced. Robert there set up the strict observance of the Benedictine Rule, purely contemplative life, with manual labour; and so edifying was his life that numerous disciples soon joined him. Unfortunately for his monastic ideal, subjects and popular veneration brought wealth and influence in their train; and thus intercourse with the outside world becoming more frequent, manual labour was set aside for study and the ministry. The

[1] On Citeaux cf. *Exordium parvum O. Cist. : Exordium magnum*, i, ch. 10-14; *Vita Sti. Roberti* (Acta SS., iii, April, 676 ff.); Manrique, *Annal. Cist.*; Janauschek, *Orig. Cist.*, i, præf.; Greg. Müller, O.C., *Gründung der Abtei Citeaux* (*Cisterciensерchronik*, 1898, 1-9, 34-46, 65-76, 97-105); Vacandard, *Vie de St. Bernard*, i, 35-60; Ursmer Berlière, *Les origines de Citeaux et l'Ordre Bénédictin au XII^e siècle : Rev. d'hist. ecclés.*, i et ii (1900-1901), 449-481, 253-290.

special form of life that it was Robert's mission to realise and show forth to the world had again become an impossibility.

His project had been a comparative failure, and he deliberated long on what was to be done. It would cost him much to abandon the monastery he had founded, but his vocation to restore primitive observance appeared to be clear: he had imbued with his ideas a small group of disciples who were ready to follow him at any cost. With the approbation of St. Hugh, Archbishop of Lyons and Apostolic Legate, he left Molesmes with twenty-one monks. In the diocese of Châlons-sur-Saône, in a marshy and untilled tract made over to him by the Duke of Burgundy, he laid the foundations of the new monastery, Citeaux. There he could live the poor and mortified life of which he had so long dreamed. There, on the Feast of St. Benedict in the year 1098, after having helped his companions to clear the ground, he inaugurated the monastery which was dedicated, like all future Cistercian abbeys, to the Blessed Virgin. That same day Robert was unanimously elected abbot; he then named as his prior and subprior Alberic and Stephen Harding respectively.

All three are canonised Saints, therefore there is no need to show with what fervour these disciples, enamoured of the primitive Rule, lived at Citeaux. Yet, as in all God's works, the beginnings were marked by many trials. The first and severest was the recall of the founder to Molesmes, which had been obtained by the monks of that abbey from Pope Urban II. The heroic renunciation which this papal mandate demanded from St. Robert had its twofold recompense; firstly, the adoption of the Citeaux observance by Molesmes; secondly, the choice of St. Alberic and St. Stephen Harding as his successors in the government of Citeaux. The monastic ideal for which St. Robert had striven so long

seemed about to flourish; but the new foundation had many trials before it could become the fruitful nursery of a new Order. During these years of beginnings a terrible mortality decimated the ranks of St. Robert's first companions. Stephen Harding, who had succeeded St. Alberic, felt his determination give way before these dwindling numbers. Seeing, moreover, that not a single novice applied for admission as the years rolled by, he had begun to ask himself whether this way of life really exceeded human strength. Then in 1113, as if to reward the endurance and constancy of the first Cistercians, St. Bernard, aged twenty-three, and thirty companions whom he had gained to religious life, knocked at the gate of the monastery. From that moment the outlook changed for Citeaux, and this house, which had seemed to St. Stephen Harding on the verge of decay, came to have a large number of monasteries following its observance throughout all Europe.

St. Bernard.[1]

Bernard, who was destined to draw the infant Order of Citeaux from its obscurity and to propagate it throughout the world, first saw the light in 1090, in the Castle of Fontaine, near Dijon. He and his brothers had the great advantage of being nurtured and trained from childhood in the practice of Christian virtues by the Blessed Aleth de Montbard, who, being deterred from entering religion herself, desired and obtained from God a religious vocation for every one of her sons. The elder sons, all unconscious of the future which lay before them, practised their father's

[1] On St. Bernard cf. Leop. Janauschek, *Bibliographia Bernardina*, Vienne, 1891. E. Vacandard, *Hist. de St. Bernard;* by the same author, *St. Bernard;* i, *Vie;* ii, *Œuvres;* iii, *Lutte contre Abélard;* iv, *Doctrine* v, *Caractère particulier et influence de cette doctrine; Dict. de théol. cathol.* (1895), ii, 746-785.

profession of arms. Bernard, who evinced from his earliest years an ardent love of study and a keen intellect, was sent to Châtillon-sur-Seine, where he learned Latin and philosophy. On his return home Aleth's son, then nineteen, remained undecided what career to choose. The unexpected death of his mother came to fix his resolution and hasten his vocation.

Some time after, as he was on his way to the siege of the Château de Grancey, he felt an interior call to a complete abandonment of the world. So forcible was that call that Bernard, not content with merely following it himself, went about seeking other recruits. He tried to bring it home to his uncle, his brothers, and the noble youth of the town of Châtillon where he had studied, and, with that convincing eloquence of his which brought about the Second Crusade, succeeded in leading them with him to make a first apprenticeship to monastic life. Then he heard of the austere life that was being led by St. Stephen Harding at no great distance, and as all Bernard sought was a monastery where he could die to the world to live to God, his mind was soon made up, and with his thirty companions he presented himself at Citeaux in the spring of 1112.

His noviceship was such as he had planned it. *Si incipis, perfecte incipe,* was to be his advice later on to his disciples. Here indeed was such a vocation as St. Stephen Harding had long desired. The door of the monastery once closed on the novice, he lived but for God. He was a model of regularity and mortification to those around him; but, above all, a marvel of recollectedness, for so absorbed was he by the interior work of transformation that exterior things, say his biographers, scarce seemed to have any existence for him. No wonder that, after only three years' training at Citeaux, Bernard was chosen by Stephen Harding to

found at Clairvaux the monastery that was to make his name and influence world-wide.

So prodigious was this influence of a monk on the life of his time, that the twelfth century has been aptly styled St. Bernard's century. Overshadowed as it was by the elevation of his genius and sanctity, he was everywhere in demand as the arbitrator between Christian peoples: in Councils, where he was seated among bishops and cardinals to defend orthodoxy; with princes, who sought him to settle their disputes; in popular assemblies, which he knew how to convince, to carry his hearers with him and to fire them with his own enthusiasm.

Even while the world of men was being incontestably ruled by him, he remained true to himself, and was through all and above all a monk. Clairvaux with its solitude, its life of peace and sacrifice, the perfect observance of Rule, and even the small obligations of religious life, he loved more than anything else in the world.

Full of zeal for the Church's interests, from his cell he kept abreast of all that was happening abroad in Christendom. He was kept informed of the perils she ran in every quarter of Europe, and forestalled the danger by his letters. He was always on the side of the poor and down-trodden. He exposed and fearlessly denounced abuses. By his treatises and other writings he settled questions of controversy. What made him intervene and thus forego for a time the quiet of his contemplative life was the wish to be serviceable, not hankering after honours, which he had renounced once and for all when he chose for his dwelling the poor and lowly house of Citeaux. All his life he continued to despise them, as is shown by his refusal of the archbishoprics of Rheims, Genoa and Milan.

The most prominent monk of his time, he was also the first orator. His eloquence was of the kind that is irre-

sistible. It gained its first victory when those thirty vocations aroused by his word formed his bodyguard on his entrance to Citeaux. The fact was certainly worth noting and inserting in the annals of the monastery. And yet what was that beside those thousands and thousands whose most legitimate affections and ties he severed at a stroke to send them forth to the conquest of the Holy Land, with no recompense to promise them save the salvation of their souls and the deliverance of the Church. This monk, silent and thoughtful, laying up in his monastic life stores of spiritual energy which were to enable him to impose his ideal and have it enthusiastically taken up by society at large, is a subject of study for the Christians of our time, whose hands are always full of exterior works.

The influence he had over the princes of his day was so great that, once he had with Peter the Venerable decided at the Council of Etampes in favour of Innocent II, the papal crown was secured for him, and the Church saved from a schism. At the meeting at Vezelay, when he proclaimed the Crusade, the King, Louis VII, fell on his knees before him and pledged himself to be the first to march to the relief of the Holy Land. He roused the crowds to such enthusiasm when he preached the Crusade in Germany and Switzerland that often he barely escaped being crushed to death. If Conrad III, the Emperor, hesitated a little at the thought of having to leave his kingdom, he too gave way before the number and greatness of Bernard's miracles, and enrolled himself at Spires under the banner of the Cross.

Bernard, the founder of Clairvaux, preacher of the Second Crusade, mainstay of the papacy against the intrigues of anti-popes, was also the formidable adversary of the prevalent religious errors. He hunted them down and pursued them to the death in Abélard, Peter of Bruys, Gilbert de la Porrée and Arnold of Brescia. His mystic writings have

more savour than those of any of his contemporaries, and, excepting the four great Latin doctors, he is the writer on spiritual things whose works were most often transcribed in the Middle Ages. Placed on the confines of two ages, says Vacandard, at the meeting-point of ancient and modern times, the Abbot of Clairvaux brings to a close the past of which he hands on the traditional teaching, and opens a new era to which he transmits it. From the thirteenth century onwards, professors of schools, orators, mystic writers, borrowed from him more than from any of the Fathers, Greek or Latin, St. Augustine alone excepted. Heretics, for example Luther or Calvin, no less than Catholics such as St. Thomas or Gerson, made it their glory to ponder over his pages and to follow his teaching. There is one author, the most illustrious of those who have remained anonymous, who bears in the Middle Ages the manifest impress of the thought and style of the sermons on the Canticle of Canticles and of the treatise on Humility. St. Bernard has furnished so much to the text of the *Imitation of Jesus Christ* that one might, without too much unlikelihood, attribute the work to him. From him the devout, unknown author has taken the words which form the epigraph of his work and sum up all its teaching: *Ama nesciri*.[1] Generally speaking, the plagiarism is less evident, the points of resemblance less striking, because less textual. But it would not be difficult to trace in the woof of the chapters a golden thread delicately worked in by the clever hand that drew them from the writings of the great abbot of Clairvaux.[2]

When Pius VIII in 1830 conferred on him the official title of Doctor of the Church, he formally recognised the

[1] Cf. *De Imitatione Christi*, lib. 1, ch. 2. Bernard, *Sermo* 3 *in Nativitate Domini* (Migne, *Patr. lat.* CLXXXIII, col. 123).

[2] Cf. Vacandard, *Dict. théol.*, ii (*St. Bernard*), 784.

worth of his spiritual writings; and the Church, by the numerous extracts from his homilies and sermons[1] which she inserts in the breviary, gives them the highest praise by making them her own.

It is not strange that St. Bernard, a compound of the saint and man of genius, drew the notice and the regard of contemporaries towards the Order which he had chosen. As already stated, scarcely had he entered Citeaux, when postulants hastened there from all parts. It became an urgent necessity to found not one, but a series of new monasteries, of which the most renowned were those called the four daughters of Citeaux: first La Ferté; then Pontigny which served as a refuge to St. Thomas à Becket and St. Edmund of Canterbury in exile; Clairvaux which was founded, and for thirty-eight years governed, by St. Bernard; and Morimond which had its foundations in Spain and Portugal, and there established the famous military Orders of Calatrava, of Alcantara, of Montesa, of Avis and of Christ. While St. Bernard lived, needless to say, the preference was for Clairvaux. In a few years he founded or aggregated to his abbey more than seventy monasteries in France, Spain, England, Ireland, Flanders, Italy and Germany. When he died on August 20, 1153, aged sixty-three years, he left more than seven hundred religious in Clairvaux and a hundred and sixty monasteries depending on the abbey.[2]

Overshadowed by the rapid rise of the Cistercians, the influence of the Black Monks of St. Benedict[3] is not a

[1] Especially in the offices of St. Joseph, of Our Lady of Dolours, and that of the Holy Angels.

[2] Ratisbonne, *Hist. de St. Bernard.*

[3] By that name were the Benedictines, properly so called, henceforth known, a name given in opposition to that by which the Cistercians were originally known, namely the Grey or the White monks on account of the colour of their habit.

whit the less in the thirteenth century. If Peter the Venerable had not the genius of St. Bernard, at least he shares with him the honour of a place in the Benedictine martyrology,[1] and, like the abbot of Clairvaux, he distinguished himself by staunch loyalty to the Holy See and by his zeal in defending orthodoxy. It was the concurrence of Peter the Venerable and St. Bernard that won the day for Innocent II at the Council of Etampes, and the Pope acknowledged the service by going in person to consecrate the new basilica at Cluny. Even as St. Bernard defeated Abélard and Gilbert de la Porrée, Peter the Venerable refuted the Koran and Mussulman tenets, while engaged at the same time in combating the heresy of Peter of Bruys. It was he, moreover, who led Abélard to penance. Throughout, making allowance for the preponderance of the Cistercian Order due to St. Bernard's personality, this epoch shows that in the social and religious guidance of Christianity the balance of influence was equal between the two branches of the Benedictine family.

While the voice of St. Bernard rang out urging nations to the Second Crusade, two Benedictine abbots, Suger, abbot of St. Denis, and Wibald of Stavelot ruled France and Germany in the name of Louis VII and of Conrad. If Bernard deserved the title given him by the Middle Ages of "Father of the Church," the prudent and enlightened minister of Louis VI and Louis VII well deserved his of "Father of his country," given him by popular veneration for having furthered the organisation of the commune, and for having laid the basis of financial administration, and materially helping to form France to national unity.

[1] He has not been formally canonised, says Moreri (vii, 223); however, his name is among the list of Saints for December 24 in the Benedictine Martyrologies, and in that of France. Cf. Baillet, *Vies des Saints*. Du Pin, *Bibl. des auteurs ecclésiastiques du XII^e siècle.*

In the course of this same century which saw the Benedictine Popes, Paschal I and Gelasius II, carry on the strife begun by Gregory VII for the Church's independence, Eugenius III, a disciple of St. Bernard, ascended the papal throne, and the Abbot of Clairvaux wrote for his guidance in government the famous treatise *De consideratione*. Thus each branch afforded its saints, abbots or bishops to fight intrepidly for the independence of the Church and the conversion of the barbarians. The list would be too long to give in full, and we shall confine ourselves to the best known. Among the Benedictines were St. Otho of Bamberg, apostle of Pomerania, St. Eberhard, Archbishop of Salzburg, the energetic champion of papal right against the claims of Frederick Barbarossa; and in the ranks of Cistercians, Blessed Eskil, Archbishop of Lund, an apostle of Denmark, and Berthold, Bishop of Riga, who shed his blood for the conversion of Livonia.

CHAPTER IV

THE MONASTIC CRISIS

THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY—A TRANSITION PERIOD—RISE OF THE MENDICANT ORDERS.

FROM the close of the sixth century to the beginning of the eighth, with an occasional set-back already noticed, the Order of St. Benedict steadily grew in numbers and influence. It was for nearly four centuries, dating from the Councils presided over by St. Boniface, the only Order recognised and approved by the Church.

A great change, however, came about in the period which closed the Middle Ages and ushered in our modern times. The intercourse between West and East brought about by the Crusades, and the circulation and study of Aristotle's

works, gave a new orientation to ideas and learning. Letters and grammar were gradually discarded, and the episcopal and monastic schools which taught them were abandoned for the study of philosophy and theology. Universities which had superseded the schools of the regulars were attracting to Paris, and still more to Bologna, the greatest professors and masters of the day, and their courses of lectures were attended by thousands of students. Unhappily, the same causes which called forth the impulse and determined the advance in higher teaching spread doubt and error in many quarters hitherto Christian. The taste for speculation imbibed from Aristotle made unbalanced and independent minds rush to conclusions not in accordance with Faith. Renewed intercourse with the East, although it bore excellent results in many respects, yet led to a dangerous revival of the Manichean heresy in Southern France. Of all thirteenth century heretics the Albigenses were the best known, most obstinate and the slowest to submit. Contemporaneous with this sect were others less numerous and led by *illuminati*, who dreamt of a return to the primitive Church, while countenancing the worst disorders among their partisans. Such are notably the Beghards, or Brothers of the Free Spirit in the North, and the Vaudois, the Apostolical Brothers, and the Joachimites, in the South.

To grapple with these heresies the Church had need of new forces more mixed up with the life of the outside world, and particularly with that of the communes and towns, then fast developing, than the Benedictines could be, living as they did on their own lands and holding to the feudal system which was manifestly dying out. Popular favour was passing to the Orders founded by St. Francis and St. Dominic, which were both approved by Rome in 1215. Living in the very midst of the people, constantly

in touch with them, "constituting," as has been said,[1] "a new cavalry at the service of all just and holy causes, armed only with poverty, penance and love of souls," these two Orders rendered inestimable service to the Church and society in the thirteenth century. The intellectual movement concentrating itself more and more in towns, the mendicants established themselves around the universities. In them they filled the principal chairs, and used all their energy and skill in defending the faith and the truth. "By their preaching and by teaching they refuted and stamped out heresy," says Abbé Martin; "they repelled the claims of Germanic Cæsarism and the lawyers; and, for more than two centuries, they kept down the tendency to a pagan revival, and the presumption of the sophists which they defeated by the most extensive and rational codification of Christian doctrine ever known."[2]

In addition to the fascination exercised by the great sanctity of a Francis of Assisi, of a Dominic, and their first disciples, there was the éclat of the teaching of masters and Doctors, such as Alexander of Hales and St. Bonaventure, Franciscans; of Albert the Great and of St. Thomas of Aquin, Friars Preachers. What wonder then that numerous vocations flocked to the new Orders! Fifty years after Innocent III had given his approbation, the Franciscans had already two hundred thousand friars, and the Dominicans, although much less numerous, had their houses in every country of Europe.[3]

From the wonderful development of the Orders of St. Francis and St. Dominic are we to rush to the conclusion, as some have done, that the coming of Franciscans and Dominicans was to put an end to the mission of the sons of

[1] Marion, *Hist. de L'Église*, ii, 521.
[2] Martin, *Les moines et leur influence sociale*, i, 221.
[3] Marion, op. cit., 519.

St. Benedict ? Certainly not; no more than the rise of the Jesuits in the sixteenth century did away with the mission of the Mendicant Orders. Neither has the appearance of numerous Congregations in the nineteenth century brought about the downfall of the Jesuits. The fact is, that when new wants are felt by the Church, Providence raises up new Orders better adapted to meet a certain condition of things than the older Orders; but not one of those grand Orders inspired by the Spirit of God is displaced, because they are there to answer certain needs. If in the thirteenth century popular favour goes with the sons of St. Francis and St. Dominic, the Benedictines do not become less serviceable to Christianity, and for fighting in the second rank their influence is not impaired.

At the beginning of the thirteenth century it was the Cistercians under Blessed Fulques, Abbot of Thoronet, then bishop of Toulouse, and Arnaud, Abbot of Citeaux, who carried on the fight with the Albigenses. Arnaud, who was named Legate of the Holy See by Innocent III in this crusade, counts St. Dominic among his preachers; and if in the event the eloquence of the Friars Preachers did much to extinguish the heresy, the heroism of St. Peter of Castelnau, Abbot of Fontevrault, who offered himself a victim to God to obtain the return of the heretics to the Faith, and perished assassinated by them and praying aloud for his murderers, was no small thing in the conversion of the Albigenses.

In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries new Congregations, Silvestrines, Olivetans, the Congregation of Corpus Christi in Italy, the Military Order of Christ in Portugal, the grouping of all the English monasteries into a Congregation, all bear evidence of the fecundity and fervour of the Order of St. Benedict. This fervour is further warranted by the number of monks and nuns of this epoch raised to the

Church's altars. Besides St. Silvester and Blessed Bernard Tolomeï, founders of new Congregations in Italy, St. Hedwige in Poland, Queen Mafalda in Castile, St. Christina, Blessed Ida, and St. Lutgarde in Belgium, Germany had the honour of possessing in the cloister of Helfta in Saxony St. Gertrude and St. Mechtilde, the two souls most favoured in that age by supernatural lights and visions.

A few salient facts will show the power for good that the Order was exercising in the world at this time. For in the fourteenth century two sons of St. Benedict, Benedict XII a Cistercian and Urban V a Benedictine, the latter abbot of St. Victor of Marseilles at the time of his election and since beatified, succeeded one another on the pontifical throne, and were among the best of the Avignon Popes. Then, as in the twelfth century the Benedictine Order had aided St. Norbert in the foundation of his Order of Canons, the Premonstratensians, so in the thirteenth century it gave its protection to two new Orders: to the Franciscans it gave the Portiuncula and the Convent of St. Clare at Assisi, and it engaged St. Dominic as the preacher of the crusade against the Albigenses, helped him to found his Convent at Prouille, and watched over the education and training of St. Thomas of Aquin at Monte Cassino. St. Felix of Valois, before establishing the Order of the Trinitarians for the redemption of captives, went to learn at Clairvaux the practice of the monastic virtues. Finally, St. Peter Nolasco, before founding the Order of Mercy, spent some time in prayer and retreat at Montserrat.

Causes of the Monastic Crisis.

The problem confronts us at this juncture, if the mission of the Order was not at an end, why was it that, in spite of reforms, new Congregations, learned works, and all the good done by the Benedictines subsequently, which we

shall show in another chapter, the influence of the monks steadily declined from the fourteenth century, until at the time of the French Revolution it had dwindled almost to nothing ?

This is an important point to make clear, because for a long time history has been falsified by infidel or Protestant writers or freethinkers, whose one aim is to cast aspersions on all that has ever been held greatest in the Church. They would have people believe that this decline of monastic influence from the fourteenth to the eighteenth century is due to the accumulated wealth of the abbeys, and the scandalous lives led by the monks. What is even more to be regretted is that many Catholics accept these statements without investigation or ascertaining whether they have any foundation.

What were really the causes of the monastic crisis ? Some of them must certainly be imputed to the monks, and we have no wish to gloss them over. Owing to want of clearsightedness and understanding of the needs of the age they took no initiative in the matter of studies at the beginning of modern times. Also, certain abuses arising from the too close union between the feudal system and the monastic Order made secular interests usurp the place of the purely spiritual. Shortcomings and real faults of these kinds are far from justifying sweeping assertions of general decadence, solely due to the relaxed life of the monks.

What should be stated, however, to enable a just estimate of the period to be formed, is that the causes which led up to the crisis and utterly disorganised monastic life, were quite beyond the control of the monks, as the mere enumeration of them will show. These causes were: in the fourteenth century and the first half of the fifteenth, the Hundred Years' War and the great Schism of the West;

in the sixteenth, the religious wars, persecutions, and spoliations by Protestant sovereigns, and above all, from the sixteenth century onwards to the French Revolution, the deplorable system of *commendam*. To show the relation between the cause and effect we shall summarily review these main causes of monastic disorganisation.

The Hundred Years' War extends from 1337 to 1437. During all that time France, where until then monachism had been most flourishing, was being perpetually harried and pillaged by bands of mercenaries in the pay of both armies. The pillages of the Free Companies were followed by the disorders and violence of Armagnacs and Burgundians, by the Jacquerie, a peasant rising, and the revolts of the Maillotins. The country devastated and decimated by plague and famine took on the aspect of desolation it had worn in the days of the Norman invasions. For entire years neither sowing nor harvesting were possible in lands trodden ceaselessly under foot by men of war. Driven from their convents, when not massacred in them, the monks were reduced to take refuge in a body in castles strong enough to protect them.

To the disorders consequent on the war were added, from the years 1378 to 1417, those which arose from the great Schism of the West. All the hierarchy, secular as well as regular, was thrown into confusion by this division of Christendom into two or, sometimes, into three obediences. The excommunications hurled by Popes, anti-popes, councils, at one another reciprocally, in these troubled times, fomented confusion and disunion on all sides, and throughout the entire monastic Order unity in government and observance naturally suffered greatly in the absence of an authority universally recognised.

Yet, as historians declare, the monastic institute at the end of the fourteenth century was "enfeebled and not

corrupted."[1] What did more to ruin it than the wars of the fourteenth century or the Great Schism was the baneful system of *commendam*.

Strange to say, this scourge, which brought about the downfall of monasticism, was instituted originally to protect it. Gregory the Great, to safeguard the spiritual and temporal interests of the abbeys during vacancies, contrived a way by which the administration and charge of them might devolve on seculars, preferably chosen among the bishops. Thus worked, the *commendam* was a safeguard for the monasteries, and was productive only of good while it remained reserved to bishops.

But in times of disorder and of open violence, so common in the Middle Ages, the system was only too often hindered from fulfilling its purpose. Great lords, under whose protection bishops and abbots had to take refuge in time of war or invasion, easily came to look on the goods of the Church as their own. They would dispose of them when and how they thought fit, giving them oftentimes in fief to profligate persons in recompense for services. The usurpation went even further than that, as in the case of Charles Martel, who made over bishoprics and abbeys to the lords of Austrasia, and so, for the time being, disorganised the entire Frankish Church.

In time, as already mentioned, owing to the intervention of St. Boniface, the sons of Charles Martel ordered partial restitution. Then, from the ninth to the fourteenth century, the Church fought successfully and unflinchingly against attempts less brutal, but not always less dangerous, to lay hands on monastic goods.

Not so, however, in the fifteenth century. The papacy came forth weakened from the Avignon captivity and the great Schism of the West. She found she had no longer

[1] Cf. Martin, op. cit., ch. 12.

the authority to oppose the claims of princes backed up by the subtleties of the lawyers. There had come about an evolution of ideas. No longer was there recourse to open violence to secure the coveted riches; pretexts could be found. At first there was only talk of the reforms necessary: the monks, it was alleged, were quite incapable of managing their own property; they needed a stimulus, too, to make them return to primitive observance. It was then advisable that all they had should be given *in commendam* —that is to say, given in trust to men capable of administering temporal possessions well, and at the same time of reviving the virtues of primitive times in the monasteries. Thus spoke the lawyers in the interests of the princes of the fifteenth century. Then they bided their opportunity—allowed time for the ideas to sink in. When they saw there was no authority able to resist them they openly vindicated their right to carry through the necessary so-called reforms.

"It was," says Abbot Martin, "under pretext of righting abuses that numbers of abbeys in the sixteenth century were given *in commendam*. But the commendatory rulers, bishops, magistrates or lords, failed to keep their promises; and instead of being the economists, they became the proprietors of the goods they held in trust for the monks. With few exceptions they wanted only to devour the prey. They took the lion's share in the revenues of the abbeys, appropriating half, three-quarters, or sometimes nearly the whole of the income. Some of them barely allowed the religious enough to subsist on. Then the monasteries began to fall into ruin, the walls to crumble and the roofs to fall in; but an Act of Parliament had to be passed before any, even the most urgent, repairs could be done. Fortunately these commendatory rulers had no concern for spiritual things. For what did bishops without vocation, ecclesiastics without morals, the younger sons of the nobility

or designing courtiers, all-powerful prime ministers like Richelieu or Mazarin, care for claustral regularity ? They punctually drew the revenues of Citeaux, of Clairvaux, of Cluny, and of Prémontré, but left the spiritual side of the lives of the inmates untouched. Had they tampered with it too, the last traces of religious life would have been effaced."[1]

It is not easy to understand why the Church, weakened though she was, tolerated such abuses. An explanation may be found in the exceptionally critical situation in which the papacy found itself at the close of the fifteenth and at the beginning of the sixteenth century. It had, before the menaces of kings and princes pressing the reforms, either to keep its eyes shut or to risk the breaking away of entire nations and kingdoms from the Church. The eager desire to lay hands on monastic goods was certainly one of the chief causes which drove the kings and great lords of England, Germany, and the kingdoms of the North into Protestantism. The Church censures what she cannot approve; but she thought she could sign with Francis I the famous concordat of 1515, which made over to the king the nomination of commendatories and bishops under certain clauses which were not fulfilled. Thus while in the kingdoms of the North the monks were being publicly deprived of their all, hunted down, imprisoned and martyred for the faith, in those countries which remained Catholic abbeys were overtly given up to any claimant that ambition or intrigue might produce.

"Like those victims of ancient tyranny," says Abbot Martin, "the monks were bound to a corpse and doomed to undergo its putrefaction. But there was something in this case which made the torture more odious. This putrefaction, the result of a mad intoxication not theirs, and for

[1] Ib., pp. 229-235 passim.

which they could not be held in the least responsible before men, was to be imputed to them as a crime with bitter and cutting reproaches. Where, by force of virtue, they were free from it, people would be convinced it must have been; where there are only slight symptoms, these would be set down as rottenness and contagion. Exaggeration and injustice with regard to monks is the common rule. It will not suffice to have despoiled, enchained, imprisoned them, they must be brought low, their names become a by-word. God's hour will come yet; the calumniators will be calumniated, the spoilers despoiled; with the possessions of the monasteries sacrilegiously plundered, they will lose theirs; a tempest will carry them off, and with them the monks wearied out and lifeless. That storm will be the deliverance of the monks; they will come forth from it with a renewed youth and primitive beauty."[1]

Signs of Progress from the Fifteenth to the Eighteenth Century—The Congregations—The Benedictine Martyrs—Monastic Reforms—The Maurists—Salzburg University.

THE CONGREGATIONS.

When we reflect on the many causes of relaxation and disorganisation that the *commendam* brought in its train to the monastic institute, we marvel that monasticism should have subsisted at all for centuries under such a system. Nevertheless, what we must bring out, if we would complete our picture of monachism in modern times, is that not only it resisted these deleterious influences, but after the fifteenth century, wherever abuses had crept in, reforms were introduced. These reforms were strenuous and permanent; they knit together for a time all that there was of

[1] Op. cit., 234.

good and the elements of order, and thus maintained tradition and life in the monastic body.

First of all, quite at the beginning of the fifteenth century, there was the Benedictine Congregation of St. Justina of Padua founded by Louis Barbo. This was distinguished for its exemplary observance and took the name of Monte Cassino, when that illustrious abbey, together with a number of Italian monasteries, had adopted the usages of St. Justina. In 1418 in Austria, Abbot Nicholas de Mazen reformed the abbey of Melk, the observance of which was immediately taken up by several Austrian monasteries. Then the sainted Abbot John of Minden began to group the German abbeys, and they soon embraced 140 monasteries. Bohemia, Hungary, Poland, Suabia, Alsace and Switzerland had also their monastic confederations a little later. In Spain, too, in the diocese of Tarragona, Martin of Vargas became promoter of a reform destined to become the flourishing Congregation of Valladolid, which was to give birth to the Congregation of Portugal. In France, where this monastic revival was retarded by the Hundred Years' War and the troubles which followed, it was organised in the sixteenth century by the two Congregations of Chezal-Benoît (1516) and of the Exempts (1588) for the Black Monks of St. Benedict, and by the Feuillants (1581) for the Cistercians.

This zeal for monastic observance with the longing to have it flourish in its primitive purity was the one aim of a monk of this period who deserves special mention. Louis de Blois, entering the abbey of Liessies as a boy, was elected abbot when only twenty-two. For some years, and without much success at first, he strove to bring back his monks to a stricter observance. Eventually he succeeded after a stay of some months at Ath, whither he had withdrawn with his most fervent disciples and from whence his community

recalled him, pledging themselves to take up a regular observance the statutes of which Paul III approved in 1545.

Faithful to his modest and unassuming device, *Latens vive,* Louis de Blois did not think himself called to any more important mission than the re-establishment of discipline at Liessies. He refused successively the prelacy of St. Martin of Tournai and the archbishopric of Cambrai offered him by Charles the Fifth, who had a great regard for him, to be able to continue his life of prayer and retirement with his now fervent community. But he was to have a considerable and beneficial influence on modern piety by the simplicity, unction, and winning sweetness of his spiritual writings. They were admired by St. Ignatius, by St. Francis of Sales, by Bossuet and Fénelon, and, in the last century, by de Lamennais, who brought out a fine translation of the "Spiritual Guide," generally regarded as the masterpiece of Louis de Blois,[1] at about the same time that he wrote his commentary on "The Imitation."

THE MARTYRS.

A still greater glory than redounds to the restorers of monastic discipline was reserved, in the sixteenth century, to other monks who were to be persecuted, hunted down and put to death by Protestants. Apostasy bore its fruits, and in all the countries won over to heresy faggots were lighted and gallows and gibbets erected by pious reformers. Their professed aim was to purify the Church and freely interpret the Bible; but their real object was to lay hands on ecclesiastical goods and find a pretext to justify spoliation. That is what was done by the Lutherans in Germany, the Calvinists in France, Belgium, and the Low

[1] On Louis de Blois cf. Boll., *Acta Sanct.*, January 7; Comte G. de Blois, *Vie du Vén. Louis de Blois ;* a new edition of his principal writings by the Rev. P. Lehmkuhl, S.J., *Manuale vitæ spiritualis.*

Countries. The same work of plunder was carried out in England by the ignoble Henry VIII, " the Defender of the Faith," who had himself proclaimed spiritual head of the kingdom that he might give himself up to his crimes unchecked. He had Bishop Fisher and Blessed Thomas More beheaded, the shrine of St. Thomas of Canterbury plundered. Monasteries, colleges, hospices, he suppressed to get hold of their revenues and squander them on his debaucheries. He had hundreds of persons either burned or hanged and quartered (among them the Benedictine abbots recently beatified by the Church: Richard Whiting, Hugh Faringdon, John Beche), because they refused to recognise his spiritual supremacy; and at length he died a victim of his own excesses, his body one mass of infectious ulcers. All his persecutors wherever they went came on monks, and as they could not make them apostatise, they despoiled them of their goods and gave them over to martyrdom. His work was taken on by his worthy daughter Elizabeth, who succeeded in surpassing her father in crime and cruelty.[1]

THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY AND MONASTIC REFORMS.

Sanguis martyrum semen Christianorum. Once more was verified in a striking manner this saying of Tertullian, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Harassed and threatened by the Reformation, the Church and monastic Order came forth from their trial renewed and fortified. The Church explained her dogma and reinforced her disci-

[1] To form an idea of the cruelty of these persecutions—a cruelty one would scarcely believe to have been practised in the sixteenth century were it not that authentic documents prove it—one should read Dom Bede Camm's book, *The English Martyrs*. It is worthy of note that Thomas More was a confrater of St. Benedict, his name having been found in the list of confratres attached to Christ Church at Canterbury.

pline at the Council of Trent, and saw a whole array of new Orders arise: Jesuits, Oratorians, Lazarists, Eudists, Clerks Regular, Theatines, Somaschans, Barnabites, Piarists, to aid her in her fight against heresy, to reform the clergy, to teach and propagate the Faith in countries newly converted. In this Christian revival of the seventeenth century, the monastic Order plays a prominent part by the importance and renown of its scientific works, by the encouragement it gave to the reformers of the clergy,[1] even while itself continuing its strenuous efforts at reorganisation.

For some time refugees in the Valladolid and Monte Cassino Congregations, the English Benedictines once more formed a distinct Congregation and went to Douai, to Paris, to St. Malo, and to Dieulouard. They did much to maintain the Faith in England, and continued to preach there and administer the Sacraments at the peril of life and limb. In France two important Congregations were formed just

[1] It was Dom Grégoire Tarisse, Superior-General of the Congregation of St. Maur, who made known to M. Olier his future mission as a reformer of the clergy and the organiser of seminaries. "As it pleased Our Lord in former days to raise up St. Benedict who renewed Christianity," he says in his memoirs, "so now it seems to me that for that same purpose has Our Lord associated me so closely with the Reverend Father General of this holy Order, and with its procurator Father Bataille, so that we three should work as one in the service of the Church. That is the reason why He gave them to me as my directors, and as those His holy Mother destined for me." Cf. Faillon, *Vie de M. Olier*. It is interesting to note the influence exercised about the same time by other Benedictines over St. Francis of Sales. Whilst pursuing his course of philosophy in Paris he had as his professor of the Sacred Scriptures the famous Génébrard, whose lessons he never forgot, especially his pious commentaries on the Canticle of Canticles. And it was again a Benedictine, Claude de Granier, Bishop of Geneva, whom St. Francis of Sales himself praises as "the model of all good bishops," who chose him as his coadjutor, trained him in the pastoral ministry, and confided to him the Mission of the Chablais. Cf. Hamon, *Vie de St. François de Sales*.

at the beginning of the seventeenth century, that of St. Vanne, begun by Dom Didier de la Cour, and that of St. Maur, which was approved by Gregory XV in 1621, numbering more than 180 monasteries, and revived in modern times the Benedictine reputation for learning.

The Cistercians renewed again at Clairvaux the strict observance and customs of Citeaux, and the famous Armand de Rancé, abbot of La Trappe, inaugurated a form of life even more austere than that of the primitive Cistercians, by the obligation of perpetual silence which he imposed on his monks.

In Spain, Italy, Bavaria, Switzerland, Belgium, on all sides new Congregations arose, bearing witness to the zeal and fervour of Benedictines and Cistercians to return to their primitive observances. This seventeenth century, which saw such valiant efforts for monastic restoration, was also the most important period from a literary and scientific point of view for the Order of St. Benedict.

Even while the German abbeys reopened their numerous and flourishing schools, the French Benedictines were engaged in bringing out those editions of the Fathers which are now so much appreciated by the learned and at that time appeared very opportunely to meet the attacks of Protestantism. Many remarkable men appeared among the monastic writers of this period, and one might almost say that in the latter half of the seventeenth century and the greater part of the eighteenth, the Benedictines were at the head of the Catholic movement for the revival of learning. A catalogue of their works would be tedious reading by reason of its length; therefore, to give an idea of their literary activity at this period as a whole, we shall confine ourselves here to works published by the congregation of St. Maur, and some account of the theological teaching given in the University of Salzburg.

THE MAURISTS.[1]

Foremost among the reformed Congregations in France, by reason of the 180 monasteries which it counted, the influence of its Abbey St. Germain-des-Prés, and the number of saintly religious it produced, was the Congregation of St. Maur. It had among its members Dom Gregory Tarisse, the friend and counsellor of St. Vincent de Paul and of Monsieur Olier. But it will remain for ever renowned for the works of erudition published by it in the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

These works, still valuable although modern criticism finds some gaps here and there in them, consist chiefly of editions of the Fathers or other ecclesiastical writers, in historic works or treatises on the historical auxiliary sciences, such as chronology, diplomacy, and palæography; of publications of unedited texts and documents bearing on monastic or Church history.

Of all the learned men the Congregation of St. Maur produced the most famous is Dom John Mabillon (1704), a very type and model of the Benedictine devoted to intellectual labour, a modern Bede, by his spirit of religion, modesty, humility, love of common life, all joined to the qualifications of a man of letters. He was the annalist and hagiographer of his Order by his publications: *Acta Sanctorum* and *Annales Ordinis Sancti Benedicti*. Besides an edition of St. Bernard, which he brought out with Dom Luc D'Achéry as collaborator, there were his *Analecta*, *Traité de diplomatique*, his *Liturgia Gallicana*, his *Museum*

[1] On the Maurists cf. Dom Tassin, *Histoire littéraire de la congrégation de Saint-Maur* (1770); *Vie de Dom Mabillon*, by Dom Ruinart; Mabillon, *Traité des études monastiques;* Emmanuel de Broglie, *Mabillon et la société de St. Germain; Mélanges et documents*, published on the occasion of the second centenary of Mabillon's death.

Italicum, and lastly his most interesting *Défense des études monastiques*, in which he ably refutes, in his customary restrained style, the exaggerated views of the Abbé de Rancé on this point. With this learned monk, in his fine serenity, we would group his collaborator Dom D'Achéry, author of the *Spicilegium* and an edition of Lanfranc's works; then Dom Ménard, editor of the *Benedictine Martyrology* and of the *Sacramentary of St. Gregory;* next Dom Ruinart, Mabillon's disciple and biographer, and author of that most excellent selection, the *Acta sincera martyrum*, and, above all others, Dom Martène, well known by his *Commentary on the Holy Rule*, his treatise on monastic and ecclesiastical rites, and that collection of documents included in the *Thesaurus anecdotorum*, and in the *Amplissima collectio*.

Throughout the eighteenth century the Maurists continued to bring out their editions of the Fathers: St. Gregory the Great, St. Irenæus, St. John Chrysostom, St. Basil, St. Cyprian, and St. Cyril of Jerusalem. Then they specialised in Church History, and we shall only mention in this connection the names of Dom Denys de St. Marthe, who began the *Gallia christiana;* Montfaucon, who published *L'Antiquité expliquée* and *Les monuments de la monarchie française;* Dom Constant, known by his *Lettres des Papes*. Others, such as Dom Toustain, Dom Clémencet, Dom Vaissette, by their skilled labour helped forward the auxiliary sciences. We might conclude this bird's-eye view of the literary activity of the French Benedictines in the eighteenth century with the mention of two writers belonging to the Congregation of St. Vanne, and as renowned as the Maurists: Dom Calmet, celebrated for his *Commentaires sur l'Écriture Sainte*, his *Dictionnaire de la Bible*, and his *Histoire de Lorraine*, and Dom Remi Ceillier, held in repute for his *Histoire générale des auteurs ecclésiastiques*.

SALZBURG UNIVERSITY.

Worthy rivals of the Maurists in the literary movement were the Austrian, German, Swiss, and Italian Congregations. To prove this it would be sufficient to mention the names of Bernard Pez, Ziegelbauer, Schram, Gerbert, Schenck, Bacchini, Gattola, also that of Mechitar, the founder of an Armenian Congregation at Venice especially instituted for intellectual pursuits. These names of well-known writers make us realise the importance of the intellectual movement in the Benedictine monasteries throughout the eighteenth century. Here again, we cannot enter into detail on the works of this period, and shall only notice them as a whole, and shall confine our attention to those of Salzburg University.[1]

This famous university was founded in 1617 by the prince archbishop Marcus Siticus, and was under the direction of the Benedictines of Bavaria, Suabia and Austria until its suppression in 1810. It included the faculties of theology, philosophy, and law. Among its professors were Celestin Sfondrati († 1696), who became abbot of St. Gall, and was subsequently made cardinal for his courageous attack on the Gallican Declaration of 1681, Augustine Reding, Paul Mezger († 1702), Louis Babenstuber († 1726).

The teachings of the *Salisburgenses*, embodied in the courses of lectures published by them, form a continuation of that of the Thomists and of the Salamanca school. In the opinion of theologians it is distinguished by its harmony, clearness, and simplicity; while the method is scholastic, the working out of the thesis is strikingly individual and original. The Salzburg school always upheld two

[1] On the University of Salzburg cf. Dom Sattler, *Collectaneen, Blätter zur Geschichte der ehemaligen Benediktiner-Universität Salzburg.*

dogmas that were to be defined in the nineteenth century by Pius IX: the Immaculate Conception and Papal Infallibility.

The Revolution.

Were we to consider only the fervour and number of these seventeenth-century reforms and Congregations, and watch only this marvellous literary and scientific productiveness, we should think the Order was prospering, and rid of the leprosy of *commendam* by which it had been gangrened since the fifteenth century. The contrary, alas, is nearer the truth. With all these reforms, of which they tried to paralyse and defeat the effect, commendatory abbots were invading and demoralising the abbeys more and more. Subjects with forced or interested vocations were hopelessly numerous. It is not the Voltairian or philosophic spirit that deters such. Add to that the infiltration of the Jansenist heresy into many of the learned abbeys left without spiritual direction; then the system of having triennial superiors, which purported to remedy the abuses of *commendam*, notably absenteeism of abbots, but of which the results proved worse than the evil itself. Instability of superiors is in direct opposition to the system laid down by St. Benedict, and this seeming remedy could not but materially alter the traditions, the family life, and the wholly supernatural relations that the Benedictine Rule would have exist between the monks and him who presides over the government of the monastery.

The real and efficacious remedy was to come from without; once again it was to be applied by the enemies of the Church. It was to be drastic, and seemed for a time completely to do away with the Order on which it fastened; but when the searching treatment of the Revolution had passed, tearing up and casting into the fire the branches of

the great Benedictine tree, the old trunk hewn down to the ground sent forth new branches. The radical and necessary pruning had done its work, and from the roots, in which the sap had been secreted, grew new shoots full of youth and vigour.[1]

CHAPTER V

THE MONASTIC REVIVAL IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

EVERYONE is familiar with the trend of ideas which brought about the French Revolution. The philosophic spirit sowing incredulity far and wide inevitably led to a contempt of all authority, and stirred up revolt and insurrection against the institutions of the past. Royalty, nobility, clergy (secular and regular), all had for the time being to vanish. When a calm set in, as it did in the first years of the Empire, it became apparent that without the Church and without religion there was no means of satisfying, as heretofore, the aspirations of the people. The Concordat renewed relations between Church and State, and it was then seen that without the regular clergy the Church was not quite complete. The religious returned quietly to those countries whence they had been driven by the Revolution in the name of liberty; but this return was effected gradually, and in nearly every place with considerable difficulty. The Revolution had spread abroad throughout Europe its spirit of impiety and independence, and, in the Latin countries especially, which fell most under its pernicious influence, associations were formed which, under the general denominations of Freethinkers and Freemasons, fomented against the religious Orders throughout the nineteenth century difficulties and persecutions of every kind.

[1] Cf. Bér., op. cit., 70.

Yet, from 1830 onwards a gradually growing need of tolerance and peace was making itself felt. Persecutions occurred from time to time in the course of the nineteenth century, but they were the result of the momentary coming into power of the Freethinkers; however, they generally did not extend beyond one country at the same time. Then, as the years passed, the various Orders, renewed and strengthened, went back to those countries in which they previously had houses.

The inauguration of the religious revival in France is due to the Trappists. Indeed, this honour would seem to have come to them as a recompense, as two hundred and fifty of them had kept up their regularity of life and their observances under the heroic leadership of Augustin de Lestrange throughout the Revolution. In 1791, when there was no possibility of their remaining in France, they took refuge abroad, hunted and tracked from one place of shelter to another by the French troops. But such intrepid endurance could not be sterile, and they saw their temporary resting-places become so many Cistercian colonies. Thus was founded Westmalle in Belgium, Darfeld near Munster, Géronde in Valais, Sordevolo in Piedmont, Cervara near Genoa, St. Susanna de Majella and Riedra in Spain, Mount St. Bernard and Stapehill in England, Orcha in White Russia and Zydishin in Volhynia. When Europe could no longer harbour them, they took refuge in the United States of America, where they founded the monastery of Gethsemane in Kentucky.

At the first news of the restoration, the indefatigable Abbot Augustin de Lestrange returned to France, to La Grande Trappe, to resume the former observance. The courage and fidelity with which he followed up the reorganisation of the Cistercian Order were so visibly blessed that

nearly every year from that date the White Monks made some new foundation, in France, Germany, Belgium, in England or Ireland, in Switzerland, Austria, Bosnia, and outside Europe, in Algeria, Syria, China, the United States, in Zululand and the Congo.

While the Trappists, absorbing almost entirely the Cistercian Order, were reconstituting themselves and spreading over the countries of the New World, the Benedictines were not behindhand, for they too were reorganising and founding colonies in lands almost unheard of. As the revolutionary ideas advanced, the Benedictines were persecuted in nearly every part of Europe. But, once rid of the *commendam*, and under the direction of monks whom they had themselves chosen as abbots, they could make headway against the storm; and if forced from their own countries, they formed again into communities in their exile, and their houses became even more prosperous than those they had left in their mother-country. Those who admit that the Church must be continually tried by adversities here below in order to increase, may take comfort from the extension of the Order through the nineteenth-century persecutions.

It was the closing by a radical government of the Einsiedeln Benedictine school at Bellinzona that gave rise to the flourishing Swiss-American Congregation, by forcing an exodus of the monks from Bellinzona to St. Meinrad in the United States. Instead of the unpretentious little convent in which they peaceably devoted their time to the Office and to the instruction of youth, after a few years of trial and hardship God gave them a new Congregation of large, influential abbeys, the direction of six seminaries, and the administration of eighty-seven missions.

The same thing happened in the foundation of New Norcia in Western Australia. The abbey was built and the

country around evangelised simply owing to the closure of many of the Spanish monasteries in 1835, and the consequent undertaking of foreign missions by Dom Joseph Serra and Dom Rudesind Salvado.

In Europe the French and Beuron Congregations owe their strength to persecution. The *Kulturkampf* drove the monks of Beuron from their abbey and established them in Belgium, England, Austria, and the Tyrol in consequence. When the "Iron Chancellor" had to capitulate and "go to Canossa," the Beuron monks went back to Germany, stronger than before by reason of their new foundations; and their numbers increased so greatly that they were able to found Maria-Laach in the Rhenish Province and St. Joseph of Coesfeld in Westphalia. The odious laws voted by the French Chambers against religious Congregations had involuntarily led to the creation of a girdle of abbeys on the frontiers of France by exiling the sons of Dom Guéranger pending the day of their return.[1]

Set on foot in France in 1833 by Dom Guéranger, encouraged about the same time by Lewis I in Bavaria, the Benedictine revival extended gradually to nearly every European country, not simultaneously, however, by reason of the political conditions prevailing in each. Referring the reader for further details to the short notices elsewhere given of each of the Congregations,[2] we confine ourselves to this statement, that at the end of the nineteenth century the Order was established in Austria, Germany, Switzerland, Italy, Spain, England, Belgium and Holland; that outside of Europe it was reorganised in Brazil; and that three absolutely new Congregations, the two American Congregations of the United States and the Bavarian Congregation of St. Ottilien, purposely intended for foreign

[1] Which has just taken place in 1922.
[2] Cf. III: The Present Position.

missions, strengthened and extended their influence in America and Africa.

This revival and development of the Order coincided with an increase of monastic influence in the government of the Church. Two monks, Pius VII and Gregory XVI, were at the Church's helm at a critical time; in addition to several cardinals the Order had, in the last century, quite a number of great Benedictine bishops and abbots. Such were Mgr. Ullathorne, Bishop of Birmingham; he was originally a Downside monk, then Vicar-General of Australia, and, as Cardinal Moran lately styled him, the veritable founder of the Church in that country. There was also Mgr. Polding of Downside, first Archbishop of Sydney. Then Dom Boniface Wimmer, founder of the American-Cassinese Congregation; Mgr. Marty, monk of Einsiedeln, founder of the Swiss-American Congregation and Vicar-Apostolic of Dakota; and the intrepid missioner of the Australian savages, Dom Salvado, founder of the abbey and diocese of New Norcia.

Fittingly, beside these truly apostolic and missionary monks, we find the earnest contemplative figures of Beuron's founders, Dom Maur and Dom Placid Wolter, and in France that of Solesmes' illustrious abbot, Dom Guéranger. "The instrument designed by Providence and prepared in France for the restoration of the religious Orders and a return to liturgical unity,"[1] Dom Guéranger, is a striking example of the services that in these latter days the Benedictine Order has been called to render to the Church. By his *Institutions Liturgiques* he brought about, in the face of great difficulties, the return of the Church of France to the Roman liturgy. In addition, by his *Année liturgique*, he succeeded

[1] These are the terms employed by Pius IX in his two briefs to the Universal Church, and to the Bishop of Poitiers on the occasion of the death of Dom Guéranger.

in fostering in the general public an understanding and appreciation of the Church's ceremonial and festivals. By his personal endeavours, taken up and carried on after him by the French Benedictines and some other Congregations, he became the chief promoter and invaluable auxiliary of the Holy See in that most important and essential movement, uniformity in the liturgy and a return to the official prayer of the Church. Further, as Dom Bérengier writes, " the Abbot of Solesmes by his vigorous polemics showed up the dangers of contemporary naturalism and its likely consequences. By his learned researches on the Roman society of the first two centuries, he brought to light the true origins of the Church. Lastly, in his valuable work *La Monarchie Pontificale*, he laid down the lines of the pronouncement of the Vatican Council on Papal Infallibility, just as he had, twenty years previously, set forth in a luminous paper the dogma of the Immaculate Conception."[1] In an age like this, when writings published and translated into all languages are a powerful weapon for good or evil, the Abbot of Solesmes stands out as one of the most fearless champions of the Church, and the one who has done most to lead back contemporary Catholic society to unity of worship and prayer.

[1] *Tabl. Histor.*, p. 80.

III

THE PRESENT POSITION

CHAPTER I

MODERN STATISTICS AND INFERENCES

AT the census taken in 1920[1] the Benedictines numbered 684 monasteries and more than 26,000 monks and nuns, divided as follows: 15 Congregations of Benedictines properly so called, with 7,058 members; 7 orders, Camaldolese, Vallombrosians, Cistercians, Trappists, Sylvestrines, Olivetans, Mechitarists following the Rule of St. Benedict, with 5,347 members; and more than 15,000 nuns, of whom 11,679 are Benedictines, 3,000 Cistercians, 250 Olivetans, and 150 Camaldolese.

There is no country in Europe in which the Benedictines did not suffer persecution at some time during the last century. Notwithstanding this, they have attained a high degree of prosperity, and this proves better than any comment of ours that monachism is tenacious of life and is very far indeed from becoming extinct. The Benedictines cannot disappear, because their mission is not accomplished. Moreover, several facts seem to indicate clearly to the intelligent observer that with the twentieth century the monks have entered upon a new period of development and fruitful activity.

[1] For the Benedictines properly so called we have quoted the numbers given in the official *Catalogue* for 1920, published under the title of *SS. Patriarchæ Benedicti Familiæ Confœderatæ;* for the affiliated Orders we have obtained our information from the *Catholic Encyclopedia*.

What are these facts? To begin with, there is to-day the diffusion of monasticism throughout the four quarters of the globe. Until the French Revolution, it was limited, with a few exceptions, to the narrow belt of Western and Central Europe. In the last century it grew lusty and took root in all parts of the world. Benedictines are now established in North and South America: in the United States, Canada, Mexico, Brazil, and the Argentine. They were responsible for the organisation of the Church in Australia, and firmly rooted in New Zealand and the Philippines. In Asia they are established in Corea, China, Japan, Ceylon, and Palestine. They have at last penetrated Africa, and have to-day monasteries in Algeria, the Transvaal, the Congo, Natal and German East Africa.

This growth is of great importance. As long as they were enclosed in the circle of peoples to whom they had helped to preach the Gospel, whom they had civilised, and whose nationality they had helped to form, they did not extend beyond the core, as it were, of old Europe. In this position they were menaced by wars in the Middle Ages, and in modern times by the persecutions of certain governments. Again, revolutionary movements coming to a focus on one point or other of the globe have almost brought about the complete suppression of the Order: this happened in Europe after the French Revolution.

Thanks be to God, such dangers are not to be dreaded in the present century. As a result of the growth of monasticism, monks who are expelled from a country in which Freemasonry is at the moment in power, find scope for their energy and their usefulness either in adjacent countries or, a larger field of action, in the New World, in which their brethren have been established during the second half of the last century.

Another cause of progress is to be found in the altered

position with regard to the Governments of the States and countries in which monasticism has taken root. In the new countries, for instance, its services are much in request. In other countries persecution, spoliation, oppressive laws, have freed it from the interference of Governments. In any case, our monks enjoy at the present moment, with few exceptions, an independence unknown to them since the Middle Ages.

Moreover, they are better organised and more united than they have ever been. In 1892 a general chapter of the Cistercians, held in Rome, voted for the fusion of nearly all the Cistercian Congregations, and chose as their head the Very Reverend Abbot of Sept-Fons, Dom Sebastian Wyart.[1] In the same year a decree of the Holy Congregation of Bishops and Regulars, and then a brief of Leo XIII, confirmed the acts of the first general chapter of the Reformed Cistercians of Notre-Dame de la Trappe. On August 13, 1904, new constitutions were approved of by the Sovereign Pontiff, and promulgated by the Congregation of Bishops and Regulars.

At the same period, by desire of Leo XIII, who always proved a most devoted benefactor of the monks, the Benedictines were formed into a federation which united the fourteen Congregations under the authority of an Abbot Primate. The first Primate, appointed by Leo XIII for twelve years, and confirmed in his office by Pius X, was Dom Hildebrand de Hemptinne. The abbey and college of St. Anselm were built on the Aventine in Rome on the initiative of Leo XIII with the noble gift of £60,000, which he presented to the Benedictines for this purpose.[2]

[1] Died in 1904, and was succeeded by the Rt. Reverend Mgr. Marre, Lord Bishop of Constance (Arabia).

[2] The present Primate is Dom Fidelis von Stotzingen, formerly Abbot of Maria Laach.

Many causes have contributed to the present vigour of monasticism. The connection between its internal government and the civil power is broken; the abuses and scandals of the *commendam* have ceased since the French Revolution. Again, the observance of the Rule is assured in each Congregation by a Superior-General (called according to the usage of the different countries, Abbot-President, Abbot-General, or Arch-Abbot) and by the regular holding of general chapters. Moreover, as the monks of to-day are governed by the abbots they themselves have chosen, monastic life and monastic virtues have flourished again in the abbeys. These virtues have attracted souls who feel called to an interior life, in which they sacrifice themselves more fully and with greater generosity for the furtherance of the kingdom of our Lord.

All these facts show us why the peoples who lost confidence for a while in monasticism have put their trust once more in these monks, who converted England, France, Germany, and Italy. They are now expected, under changed conditions, to render services as important as those they have rendered in the past.

In order that the reader may judge how legitimate are these hopes and how well founded these assertions, we give in Chapter II brief notices of the origin and development of the fifteen Congregations of to-day. In Chapter III will be found fuller information concerning the external activity of the monks in the present century.

CHAPTER II

THE PRESENT CONSTITUTION OF THE ORDER— THE FIFTEEN CONGREGATIONS

I. The Congregation of Monte Cassino.

This Congregation was founded about the year 1408 by Ludovico Barbo, who established at St. Justina of Padua an observance adopted by the majority of Italian abbeys. It took its present name when Monte Cassino united itself to the observance of St. Justina. The prosperity of this Congregation, which comprised two hundred houses and had continued to flourish, was put an end to by the wars at the time of the French Revolution, and more recently by the decrees of the Italian Government. The Congregation has been still more reduced in number by the formation in 1872 of the Cassinese Congregation of Primitive Observance.

The present Congregation includes three great abbeys: Monte Cassino, which is the mother-abbey, founded by St. Benedict in 529; the abbey of St. Paul-without-the-Walls at Rome, which dates from the seventh century; and that of the Blessed Trinity at La Cava, of the eleventh century. The mother-abbey of Monte Cassino and those of St. Paul and La Cava are abbeys *nullius*, each having a diocese, which is administered partly by monks and partly by secular priests dependent on the abbeys.

The monks of the congregation devote themselves to the recitation of the Divine Office, the administration of parishes and teaching. The abbeys of Monte Cassino and of Cava have each a seminary for the training of the secular priests of the diocese and a lay college. Lectures are given in both abbeys for the most part by the monks, assisted by secular priests and laymen in the lower forms.

The seminary of Monte Cassino is a diocesan one, and

serves for the united dioceses of Cassino and Atina. It is under the sole jurisdiction of the abbot, who appoints one of his monks with the title of rector to represent him in the management of the seminary.

The other abbeys of the Congregation are those of St. Peter at Modena, St. Mary at Florence, St. Peter at Perugia, St. Catherine at Siena, St. Peter at Assisi, St. Mary at Cesena, St. Nicholas at Catania, St. Martin at Palermo, St. Mary at Monreale, St. Mary at Farfa, and St. James at Pontida.

II. The English Congregation.

Oldest among the existing Congregations which compose the Benedictine Order of to-day is that which has maintained itself in England since the year 1215. Long before that date, indeed, the children of St. Benedict had played a large part in the evangelisation and civilisation of England. The first apostle of the land, St. Augustine, who with forty monks had been sent thither by St. Gregory the Great in 596 or 597, had established the first Benedictine monastery out of Italy at his episcopal city of Canterbury; other abbeys were set up gradually in different parts of the country, generally in conjunction with the seats of the newly founded bishoprics, and thus the monastic institute was widely propagated up and down England. A notable feature of the Church in England in pre-Reformation times was this close connection between the centres of Church life and government and the monks of St. Benedict. Besides the metropolitan church of Canterbury, eight other cathedrals had chapters of Benedictine monks: Rochester, Winchester, and Bath in the South; Worcester and Coventry in the Midlands; Ely and Norwich in the East; and Durham in the North. These houses were, so to say, monuments of the early missionary work of the first teachers of

the nation—houses and centres of its religion and its learning, the shrines of many of its Saints, the pride and glory of the land. Next to the cathedrals came the great abbeys, their rivals in extent, in the magnificence of their churches, in their historical associations, in their place in the hearts of the people. Think what Westminster meant and still means to England; what pictures do not the names of Glastonbury, Gloucester, Evesham, Tewkesbury, St. Augustine's at Canterbury, Peterborough, St. Albans, call up? Who can think of the great King Alfred without remembering his foundations at Athelney, and Hyde near Winchester, where he was interred? And so it was in nearly all parts of England; some Benedictine house, great or small, was to be found to link the monks of St. Benedict with popular and local interests. And besides the nine cathedral monasteries and the forty abbeys of Black Monks, there were a score of independent priories and dozens of cells or lesser dependent houses to swell the number. Nor would we forget the number of monasteries owing allegiance to foreign abbeys: the houses of monks of Cluny and Citeaux, and the offshoots, alien priories as they were called, of other continental communities. Counting all the houses, great and small, there were probably over three hundred homes of St. Benedict's children scattered up and down England in the days of Catholic unity.

But all this was to pass away when the storm of the miscalled Reformation broke over the land. With the martyrdom of the abbots of Glastonbury, Reading and Colchester, the end seemed to have come for St. Benedict's Order in England. But God took pity on it; during the brief reign of Queen Mary the abbey of Westminster was reopened, and through one of its monks, Dom Sigebert Buckley, the ancient lineage was perpetuated. A number of English students in the seminaries of Rome, Valladolid and Douai

entered into the Benedictine Order, and joining hands with those whom Dom Buckley had aggregated to the ancient English Congregation, formed the nucleus of the English Congregation of to-day. Monasteries were established at Douai in Flanders (1605), at Dieulouard in Lorraine; at St. Malo; at Paris; and at Lamspring near Hildesheim; one or two other foundations which were begun had to be abandoned owing to the wars and troubles of the times.

Meanwhile many of the monks of these new houses found their way at the risk of life and limb into England, to labour on the Mission, to try and save at least a remnant of their countrymen, to begin again the apostolate, which had been of old entrusted to them by the Apostolic See. In this work many gave up their lives: some in prison, some on the scaffold. Among the martyrs the cause of whose beatification is now before the Roman tribunals, may be named the Ven. Servants of God: Mark Barkworth, George Gervase, John Roberts, first superior of St. Gregory's at Douai, Maurus Scot, Thomas Tunstal, Ambrose Barlow, Alban Roe, Philip Powel and Brother Thomas Pickering. Their places on the English Mission were quickly filled, and till the era of the French Revolution there were always a number of Benedictines labouring in obscurity all over England to keep the Faith alive. The great upheaval at the end of the eighteenth century drove the English communities out of France, and they finally settled in England. St. Gregory's, after leaving Douai, found a house at Acton Burnell in Shropshire, and eventually (1814) at Downside in Somerset; St. Laurence's from Dieulouard settled at Ampleforth in Yorkshire; the Paris house of St. Edmund, after sixty or seventy years at Douai, moved to England and established itself at Woolhampton, near Reading; the Lamspring community was refounded first of all at Broadway, near Evesham, and subsequently at Fort

Augustus in Scotland. A new monastery, the cathedral priory of St. Michael and All Angels, was opened at Belmont, near Hereford, in 1859; it was erected into an abbey in 1920.

Attached to the four first-named houses are schools for the upper classes, which attract a large number of students, whose education, after the Opus Dei or Divine Office in the choir, forms the chief item in the daily life of the communities. St. Gregory's at Downside has over three hundred boys in the abbey school, besides nearly as many in its schools at Ealing, near London, and at Mount St. Benedict, near Gorey in Ireland. Both at Ampleforth and Woolhampton there are large colleges. The English Benedictines have also opened residences for study and research; Downside has a house in the University of Cambridge for its young religious, and another for historical studies in London; Ampleforth has a flourishing hall in the University of Oxford.

Besides its educational work, the English Congregation has no small share in the apostolic ministry which has always in one shape or another been so notable a mark of its labours in England. About one hundred parishes of one sort or another are attached to the different abbeys, and for the most part served by the monks. Their churches are found in London (2), Liverpool (4), Swansea, Cardiff, Bath, Bristol, Coventry, Whitehaven, Warrington, and in many smaller places, in town and country, with the spiritual care of about 100,000 souls, where for generations the Benedictine fathers have laboured with great success. Nor have their activities been restricted to England; to them the Australian Church owes in a large measure its formation and organisation. John Bede Polding and Roger Bede Vaughan, first and second Archbishops of Sydney; Dr. Davis, Bishop of Maitland; and Dr. Ullathorne, first Bishop

of Birmingham, all were Benedictines and laboured in that distant colony; Bishops Slater, Morris, Collier, Hankinson, Scarisbrick and O'Neill have successively ruled the diocese of Port Louis in Mauritius. Bishops Brown, of Newport, and Ullathorne, of Birmingham, were the first to govern those sees on the creation of the modern hierarchy in England. At the present day, Dr. Caruana, Bishop of Malta and Archbishop of Rhodes, and Dr. Bilsborrow, formerly Archbishop of Cardiff, are members of the English Congregation.

The Congregation is ruled by an abbot-president, by a general chapter, and by the abbots or priors of the monasteries. The professed choir monks of the Congregation number over three hundred.

It had the honour of seeing one of its members, the Right Reverend Dom Aidan Gasquet, Abbot-President, a well-known writer and member of the Biblical Commission, raised to the cardinalate in 1914.

This account of the English Benedictines would be incomplete without a word about the monks of Caldey Island, although they do not belong to the English Congregation. By their fidelity to the Rule of St. Benedict in their Anglican days they drew down on themselves the blessing of heaven, and it was as a Benedictine community that they were welcomed into the Church by Pius X.

The houses of nuns under the jurisdiction of the Congregation are three in number: St. Mary's Abbey at Stanbrook, near Worcester, with about seventy religious; St. Scholastica's Priory of Fort Augustus, now at Holme Eden Abbey, Cumberland, with about twenty; and the convert community of Our Lady, Help of Christians, formerly at Milford Haven, now at Talacre in North Wales, which numbers about fifty religious. The numerous other houses of Benedictine nuns in England are under the care

of the bishops. They comprise the abbeys of East Bergholt, Oulton, Teignmouth, St. Cecile and St. Michael, in the Isle of Wight; and the priories of Colwich, Atherstone, Princethorpe, Ventnor, Dumfries, and Bicester. To some—namely, Oulton, Princethorpe, Ventnor, and Dumfries—schools are attached, frequented by a large number of scholars; and a few have the perpetual adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.

III. The Swiss Congregation.

The Swiss Congregation was organised in the first years of the seventeenth century, thanks to the initiative of Abbot Augustine of Einsiedeln. The political troubles at the end of the eighteenth century greatly reduced the Congregation, which is to-day composed of five monasteries: Einsiedeln, Muri (now at Gries in Tyrol), Dissentis, Engelberg, and Mariastein, which moved to Dürnberg in Austria in 1902, but in 1906 settled at Bregenz. Einsiedeln, the mother-abbey founded in 934, on the site of the hermitages of St. Meinrad and St. Benno, is the centre of the celebrated pilgrimage of Our Lady of the Hermits, which has continued to develop since the foundation of the abbey. All these abbeys possess or administer important colleges; Muri-Gries has, in addition, an establishment for the training of schoolmasters. A certain number of monks devote themselves to the administration of the twenty-five parishes entrusted to the Congregation. Others have gained a reputation by their erudition and their learned works, as, for instance, Dom Odilo Ringholz by his historical publications, and Dom Albert Kuhn by his General History of Art.

The abbey of Einsiedeln sent out a little band of monks to the United States in 1853, and this colony developed, in 1881, into the Swiss-American Congregation.

IV. The Bavarian Congregation.

The Bavarian Congregation of the Holy Guardian Angels was approved of in 1684 by Innocent XI. It was formed by the union of eighteen monasteries, the majority of which had existed for centuries in Bavaria.

The Congregation continued to flourish up to the secularisation of the monasteries at the beginning of the last century, when all the religious Orders of Germany were abolished. From the year 1830 onwards the pious king, Lewis I, who carried out faithfully the concordat established between the Holy See and Bavaria, furthered by all the means at his disposal the reopening of the ancient abbeys of Metten, Ottobeuren, Scheyern and Andechs. He founded new monasteries at Augsburg (1834), Munich (1835), Weltenburg (1842) and Schäftlarn (1865).

The Congregation composed of these different monasteries, which was restored by Pius IX in 1868, has been increased recently by the ancient abbeys of Plankstetten and Ettal. The president of the Congregation is the abbot of St. Boniface of Munich.

Teaching is vigorously pursued in the Bavarian Congregation. At Metten, Augsburg, Scheyern, Ettal, and Schäftlarn there are colleges in which almost all the monks who teach have University diplomas. The Congregation has also two schools of agriculture at Plankstetten and Weltenburg, two educational establishments for poor children at Ottobeuren and Andechs, and a reformatory at Rothenfeld, a branch of Andechs. A priory, a dependency of the abbey of Scheyern, has been founded recently at Munich in order to enable the monks of the Bavarian Congregation to attend the lectures of the University and at the same time to lead a conventual life.

Besides the abbeys, the Bavarian Congregation officiates

in fifteen parishes, of which the most important is St. Boniface at Munich (65,000 souls), many churches and public oratories. It has had the honour of seeing one of its members, the Most Reverend Dom Leo Mergel, first a professor at, and later abbot of, Metten, raised, in 1905, to the episcopal see of Eichstätt.

V. The Brazilian Congregation.

The Brazilian Congregation dates from the sixteenth century, and was at first an offshoot of the Portuguese Congregation. In 1827, in consequence of the separation of Brazil from Portugal, the eleven Brazilian monasteries then in existence were established as an independent Congregation by Leo XII. In 1855 a Government decree forbade the reception of novices, and as this decree remained in force until 1889, the Congregation had almost died out. When the Emperor, Dom Pedro, fell, the abbot of Bahia had recourse to Leo XIII, asking him to appeal to the Benedictines in Europe to infuse fresh life into the Congregation. Leo XIII entrusted the Mission to the Congregation of Beuron; and in 1895 a little colony of monks from Maredsous, with Dom Gerard van Caloen at their head, went to Brazil and took possession of the abandoned abbey of Olinda.

A new era then began for the Brazilian Congregation, thanks to the united and persevering efforts of the old abbot of Bahia, Dom Machada, and Dom Gerard van Caloen, who afterwards became abbot of Olinda, then, in 1905, abbot of Rio. The monastic life was rehabilitated at Rio, Olinda, Bahia, and St. Paul. Two new houses were founded, one in the healthy part of Brazil, at Ceará, the other at St. Andrew, near Bruges (Belgium). The latter was formed into an abbey, and was established for the purpose of receiving and training missionaries for Brazil and the Congo.

Teaching and, above all, parish work occupy the time not spent by the monks in the recitation of the Office. The abbeys of Rio and St. Paul have colleges, which are well known in Brazil, and the abbey of St. Paul has also opened a free faculty of philosophy in 1908, under the direction of Mgr. Sentroul. As regards their mission, besides the usual work—administering the parishes, religious teaching in the schools, the spiritual direction of religious communities—a vast field of action lies open in Brazil to those who are attracted by the labours of the apostolate, when one considers the scarcity of priests and the immense territories in which the Gospel has not yet been preached.

In 1907 His Holiness Pius X, who ardently desired the conversion of the inhabitants of Brazil, especially that of the Indians of Rio Branco, who are still idolaters, separated this territory from the diocese of the Amazon, which, although the largest in the world, contained only forty priests. The new diocese administered by the abbey *nullius* of Rio was placed under the jurisdiction of Mgr. van Caloen, whom His Holiness had previously made titular Bishop of Phocea. More recently, another mission, that of Rio Pardo, was entrusted to the monks of Bahia, at the request of the Bishop of Bahia.

The abbey of St. Paul publishes a daily paper, *L'Estandarte Catholico*, and the missions of Brazil and the Congo have as their organ a monthly review, which appears under this name at the abbey of St. Andrew near Bruges.

In 1912 a conventual priory belonging to this Congregation was founded at Trinidad, in the diocese of Port of Spain, dedicated to Our Lady of Exile. It has three parishes and six daughter churches, with some 10,000 souls attached to it.

VI. The Congregation of France.

The French Congregation was the first of the Benedictine Congregations properly so called to be restored after the French Revolution. Their new cradle was the ancient priory of Solesmes, where Dom Prosper Guéranger settled down with some disciples in 1833. The priory was made an abbey in 1837, when the Constitutions drawn up by Dom Guéranger were approved by the Holy See. In 1853 a second abbey was established on the site of the oldest monastery of the Gauls, at Ligugé; a third at Marseilles (1865); and a fourth for nuns at St. Cecile, near Solesmes.

All these houses and some others of a later date were suppressed by the infamous law concerning Congregations, and were re-established abroad; the abbey of Solesmes at Quarr Abbey in the Isle of Wight; Ligugé at Chèvetogne in Belgium; Marseilles at Chiari in Lombardy; Glanfeuil at Trois-Vierges in the Grand Duchy of Luxemburg; St. Wandrille at Dongelberg in Belgium; the priory of Wisque at Osterhout in Holland; and that of St. Anne of Kergonan at Linciaux in Belgium. Many of these are now returning to their old homes in France.

Some monks from Solesmes and Ligugé settled down in 1880 in the ancient abbey of St. Dominic of Silos, near Burgos, in Spain, and have already founded a house in Mexico. In 1895 the French Benedictines were called by the Empress Eugénie to Farnborough; this house was made an abbey in 1903. Silos has now cells at Madrid and Buenos Ayres, St. Wandrille another at du Lac in the diocese of Sherbrook in Canada, and Ligugé one at Cogullada in the diocese of Saragossa. There is also a priory at Paris, founded in 1893.

With the exception of the abbey of Silos, which administers a parish and has the management of two schools,

the monks of the French Congregation, during the nineteenth century, devoted themselves neither to teaching nor to parish work. They dedicated themselves in an especial manner to study, to the production of historical, liturgical and patristic works. It suffices to mention the names of Dom Guéranger, Dom Pitra, Dom Pothier and Dom Cabrol to justify this dedication.

VII. The Beuron Congregation.

The Congregation of Beuron was founded in 1863 by two German priests, the brothers Wolter, who received the habit at St. Paul-without-the-Walls at Rome. When their monastic training was completed, they were entrusted by Pius IX with the re-establishment of the Benedictine Order in their native land. They returned to Germany and settled down with the assistance of the Princess Catherine of Hohenzollern, who placed at their disposal the then abandoned monastery of Beuron, near Sigmaringen. The development of their abbey was arrested, some years later, by the *Kulturkampf*, which forced the Beuron monks to leave their monastery for a few years. However, the consequences of the *Kulturkampf* were, on the whole, happy. For during these years of exile the expelled monks founded in succession Maredsous in Belgium (1872), Erdington in England (1876),[1] Emaus in Prague (1880), and Seckau in Styria (1883). On their return to Beuron in 1884 their Congregation was increased by Maria-Laach (Prussia, 1892), Mont-César at Louvain (1899), St. Joseph at Coesfeld (1901), the monasteries of Kempen in Westphalia, Mount Sion in Jerusalem,[2] and three abbeys of nuns: St. Gabriel

[1] In 1922 Erdington was transferred to Weingarten, an old abbey in Würtemberg.

[2] In 1920 the Beuron monks restored the ancient Abbey of SS. Udalric and Afra at Neresheim, which was founded in 1095. They have also a priory at Gruessau depending on Emaus.

at Prague, St. Scholastica at Maredret, and St. Hildegard at Eibingen on the Rhine. In 1895 the ancient Abbey of Cucujaes in Portugal was affiliated to the Congregation.

The rapid development of this new Congregation seems to be due to its fidelity to the traditional principles of the Order, namely, the undertaking of the many and various works demanded by the Church, and the refusal of those only which might prove prejudicial to the regular monastic life. For instance, the monks of this Congregation devote themselves strenuously to parish affairs, but at the same time they stay as far as possible in their monasteries, and they accept outside missions for a limited time only. They accept only those parishes which are near their abbeys. The outside work of the Congregation comprises also the direction of numerous religious communities. The work done in the monastery itself takes the form chiefly of collective and private retreats. The monks are guided by the same principles in their work of teaching. Beuron, Maredsous, Emaus, and Seckau have schools which are purposely small, so that the pupils may have the advantage of individual attention as in family life, and that at the same time the conventual life may not be disturbed.

Among the modern Benedictine Congregations, that of Beuron is specially noticeable for having restored the practice and teaching of religious art. Beuron has become famous for its school of painting. To this school is due the decoration of Monte Cassino, and that of numerous churches in Switzerland, Austria, and Germany. The Maredsous monks have followed in the footsteps of the Beuron community by opening in 1903 St. Joseph's school of arts and crafts, which is occupied principally in religious decorative art. Next to the French Congregation, that of Beuron has taken the most active part in the reform of the chant

by numerous publications and by establishing in Beuron a school of sacred music.

This Congregation has had the honour of fostering in its midst the first primate of the Order, Dom Hildebrand de Hemptinne and also his successor, Dom Fidelis von Stotzingen. A number of the monks have gained a reputation by their learned works, and His Holiness Pius X recognised their merits in choosing several among them as advisers to the Commissions which have in hand the codification of Canon Law, the study of the Scriptures, and the revision of the Vulgate.

VIII. The American Cassinese Congregation.

The last century witnessed no more wonderful instance of the Church's vitality than its triumphant progress and development in the United States. The Benedictine Order had its share in this development, and has found a new and vast field for its activities in the wide regions of the Western world. Not that it was altogether a stranger in the Americas. Greenland in the far North had known the Benedictines, and as late as the pontificate of Alexander VI a bishop of the Order had been sent out to revive and reorganise the long-suffering, half-extinct Church of that distant settlement. It was a Benedictine, Dom Bernard Boil, of Montserrat, who accompanied Christopher Columbus in 1493 as vicar to the newly discovered islands and lands of Central America. Cartier, too, the intrepid French discoverer and explorer of Canada, was accompanied on his travels by two Benedictine monks, who were the first to plant the Church in a region which still ranks among the most devout and zealous in the Catholic world. A French colony, established near Baltimore at the end of the eighteenth century, had a Maurist father, Dom Desiderius, as its spiritual head with episcopal powers. But no per-

manent monastery of the Order was set up in North America till the middle of the next century. Its establishment came about in this way.

Among the thousands of Germans who began to find their way to America, there were but few priests to minister to their spiritual needs; and no satisfactory solution of the difficulty was found till Dom Boniface Wimmer, a monk of Metten in Bavaria, was inspired to undertake the work of establishing a monastery in the United States, which should be at once a place of education for the rising generation and a seminary for the training of priests for the service of the ever-growing German element in America. With his abbot's sanction, and the generous help of King Lewis of Bavaria and of the societies established for the assistance of emigrants, Dom Wimmer set forth with a few companions in 1846; and before the end of the year was settled at St. Vincent's near Latrobe, some thirty or forty miles north of Pittsburg in Pennsylvania. After the inevitable difficulties of a new foundation, the worst was over by 1855, when on August 24 a pontifical brief erected the house into an abbey and gave canonical existence to the new American Cassinese Congregation. By that time the handful of monks had grown into a family of thirty-four professed, twenty-three novices and scholastics and over a hundred lay-brothers. In 1856 St. John's in Minnesota, now a large and flourishing abbey, was established, its first abbot being Dom Rupert Siedenbusch, subsequently Vicar-Apostolic of Northern Minnesota. In the same year the abbey of St. Benedict at Atchison City, Kansas, was begun. Next year saw the beginnings of St. Mary's at Newark, near New York; in 1875 St. Mary Help was founded at Belmont in North Carolina (its present abbot is Bishop Leo Haid, Vicar-Apostolic of the district). St. Bernard's Abbey at Cullman dates from 1891; St. Procopius' in Chicago,

begun in 1887, was made an abbey in 1894. This last-named house was set aside for Bohemians, and the work and ministry of the fathers belonging to it is confined almost exclusively to the numerous Bohemian element in that part of America. They conduct a large and important printing-press, and a large part of their apostolate is devoted to the publishing of Catholic books, pamphlets, and papers of every kind for the benefit of that section of the population. A large Bohemian college in the suburbs is another development of this interesting foundation. St. Leo's Abbey in Florida was begun in 1889 and raised to abbatial rank in 1902. It has a dependent priory in the Cuban island of Pinos, and maintains two colleges and several Missions. At Peru, in Illinois, is another abbey, dedicated to St. Bede, begun in 1889 and raised to its present rank in 1910. St. Peter's Abbey, at Muenster, in Saskatchewan in Canada, had its beginnings twenty years ago in Illinois, and moved northward into British territory in 1903—the first monastic house which the children of St. Benedict have made for themselves in Canada. The Abbey of St. Martin, at Lacey, was founded in 1895, and has already about forty professed monks. Besides these, the mother-houses of the Congregation, there are a great number of dependent priories, colleges, and Missions, where the normal work of the present-day Benedictines is in full vigour. The Congregation has the care of about two hundred and seventy parishes, numbering roughly 166,000 souls. In its colleges and high schools, twenty-one in number, about four thousand boys receive their education.

Besides the monks, there are large and numerous communities of Benedictine sisters of various Congregations in the United States, twenty-four mother-houses, and a number of dependencies; the professed nuns number over three thousand, and novices and postulants seem to abound.

IX. The Swiss-American Congregation.

The introduction of the Swiss Benedictines into America dates from 1853, when at the invitation of the Bishop of Vincennes a few monks set out from Einsiedeln to establish a monastery in the United States. The leader of the party was Dom Bede O'Connor, a Londoner by birth, an Irishman by descent, who with his little band was most cordially received by the bishop, Mgr. de St. Palais, his clergy and people; and after a few more volunteers had arrived from Switzerland, the first monastery, Our Lady and St. Meinrad's, was canonically opened on March 21, 1854. The prior, Dom Martin Marty, was later on raised to the episcopate as Vicar-Apostolic of Dakota, 1879. In 1889 he was made Bishop of Sioux Falls; and in 1895, Bishop of St. Cloud, Minnesota.

Sixteen years later, September 30, 1870, Pope Pius IX raised the house to the rank of an abbey, and constituted it the head of the Swiss-American Congregation, which was formed at the same time. Since that day the history of this Congregation has been one of constant growth and development.

A second monastery, now the abbey of the Immaculate Conception, in Rodaway county, Missouri, was opened by a colony from the abbey of Engelberg in Switzerland in 1873. Its leader, Dom Frowin Conrad, is now abbot of this New Engelberg and president of the Congregation. St. Benedict's Abbey, or New Subiaco, in the diocese of Little Rock, dates from 1878, and reached its present dignity in 1891. The fourth abbey is that of St. Joseph at Covington, near New Orleans (1889). Next comes St. Mary's Abbey in Richardton (1899), whose first abbot, Dom Vincent Wehrle, was nominated first Bishop of Bismarck in 1910. The abbey of St. Benedict at Mount Angel in Oregon was a

second foundation from the famous older Engelberg(1882); and with St. Michael's, as yet only a priory at Cottonwood, completes the catalogue of the capitular houses of the Swiss-American Congregation. The seven monasteries reckon, in all, between two and three hundred choir religious and a hundred and fifty lay-brethren.

Like the monks of most of the modern Benedictine bodies, the fathers of this congregation are engaged in missionary work and education. They serve over a hundred churches and chapels in different parts of the States, and in the nine colleges and high schools which they direct about 800 boys are educated. Like their brethren of the American Cassinese body, they have flourished in a wonderful way, and have shown the marvellous adaptability of the Benedictine Rule and life to countries and surroundings never dreamed of by their holy founder.

X. The Cassinese Congregation of the Primitive Observance (Subiaco).

This Congregation, which was at first a branch of the Cassinese Congregation, when authorised by Pius IX in 1851 to make use of a stricter rule, was called the Subiaco branch, from the name of its most important abbey. It became an independent Congregation with its present title in 1872, when the rule it followed had been adopted by new monasteries outside Italy. It is one of the most important, by reason of the numerical preponderance of its monks, its schools and its missions. This Congregation has two characteristic marks: its division into provinces according to the different countries in which it possesses establishments, and its zeal in spreading the Order in the New World. This zeal has resulted in the founding of houses in New Zealand, the Philippines, the United States, the Argentine, Australia, and the Transvaal.

The Congregation comprises five provinces: the Italian, English, Belgian, French, and Spanish provinces.

The Italian province has eleven monasteries, among which are the two abbeys of Sacro Speco, in which is venerated the grotto of St. Benedict, and of St. Scholastica, at Subiaco; the abbeys of St. Julian at Genoa, of St. John at Parma, of St. Mary at Praglia, the monastery of St. George at Venice, St. Justina at Padua, and the abbey of Monte Vergine, formerly the mother-house of the Congregation of that name.

The English province contains one monastery only, that of Ramsgate, founded in 1860 in the Isle of Thanet, the landing place of St. Augustine and his companions. This monastery was made an abbey in 1896. Ramsgate, to which a flourishing college is attached, founded a house in New Zealand.

The French province owes its origin to the celebrated Père Muard, at first a secular priest and founder of a Congregation of diocesan missionaries, then for some time a monk at Subiaco. After his profession in 1849, he returned to his native land with two companions, and founded at Pierre-Qui-Vire, in the middle of the woods of Morvan, the Congregation of Benedictine preachers, who followed a very austere rule, whilst devoting themselves to the giving of missions in towns and in the country. The house which he founded prospered; and in 1854, after his death, was affiliated to the Congregation of Subiaco. Since then other houses have been founded: at Béthisy (1859), St. Benoît-sur-Loire, the ancient Fleury (1865), Oklahoma in the Indian Territory of the United States (1874), Belloc (1875), Kerbenéat (1888), Dourgne (1890), Niño Dios in the Argentine (1899), and Jerusalem (1901). In 1880, and again in 1903, the French Government expelled all the communities of the Congregation in France. The Pierre-Qui-Vire

monks divided themselves into three groups. The most important of these settled down, after 1880, in the ancient Cistercian monastery of Buckfast, which became an abbey once more in 1902; and the two others established themselves at Kain near Tournai, and at Heide in Belgium. The monks of Belloc and Dourgne settled in Spain, those of Kerbenéat at Caërmaria in Cardiganshire. They have since returned to France.

The Belgian province, which owes its origin to the affiliation of Termonde to Subiaco in 1858, comprises, besides the abbey of Afflighem, annexed in 1870, Steenbrugge, founded in 1878, and Merkelbeek, founded in 1893. Strange to say, this province has two houses in the diocese of Cologne—viz., that of St. Michael at Siegburg and that of St. Benedict of Aniane at Cornelimunster. It also has attached to it the Prefecture Apostolic of the Northern Transvaal.

The Spanish province, which came into being in 1862 by the affiliation of the ancient abbey of Montserrat, founded in the tenth century, was formed in 1893 by the union of this abbey with the ancient monasteries of San Clodio, Vilvaneyra and Samos, which were restored between 1880 and 1888. Fresh foundations have since been made at Pueyo (1890), Los Cabos (1900), Solsona (1901), Lorenzana (1910), Manilla in the Philippines (1895) and Puente-Alto in Chile.

This province also comprises the abbey *nullius* of New Norcia in Western Australia. The abbey was founded by two Spanish monks, Joseph Serra and Rudesind Salvado, after the general suppression of Spanish monasteries in 1835. After a stay in La Cava, the two exiles, seeing no hope of ever returning to Spain, took up foreign missions, and were sent to Australia in 1846. They settled down in the North of Perth among the natives, and built an abbey on a deserted spot, which they called New Norcia in honour

of St. Benedict. The beginnings of this mission were particularly difficult, but at the end of a few years the two Spanish monks saw their labours crowned with success. In recognition of their services, Dom Serra was chosen as coadjutor to the Bishop of Perth, and Dom Salvado was promoted to the bishopric of Port Victoria, remaining abbot at the same time of New Norcia, made an abbey *nullius* in 1867.

XI. The Austrian Congregation of the Immaculate Conception.

The Austrian abbeys, which are among the most ancient, followed in the fifteenth century the salutary example of the Congregation of St. Justina of Padua. They were grouped into two federations, and this division lasted until the end of the eighteenth century. The federations were nearly destroyed during the oppressive reign of Joseph II, and the laws which forbade the reception of novices. But they revived, and under Leo XIII in 1889 were formed into two new Congregations, that of the Immaculate Conception and that of St. Joseph.

The Congregation of the Immaculate Conception comprises eleven abbeys: Kremsmünster, founded in 777; the arch-abbey of St. Margaret of Brewnow (993); the monastery of St. Wenceslaus in Braunau (1322); the abbey of St. Lambrecht in Styria (1076); the abbey of Our Lady of Göttweig (1033); of St. Blaise at Admont (1074); of SS. Peter and Paul at Melk (1089); of St. Paul in the Lavant Valley (1091); of Our Lady of Seitenstetten (1114); of St. Lambert of Altenburg (1144); of Our Lady ad Scotos in Vienna (1158).

As regards parish work, this Congregation is by far the most important. The abbey ad Scotos in Vienna, besides the churches and oratories over which it has jurisdiction, administers 18 parishes with more than 100,000 souls;

Admont 55,000, St. Wenceslaus 53,000, Melk 45,000, Kremsmünster 43,000, Göttweig 41,000. Moreover, this Austrian Congregation is renowned for its teaching. It possesses seven colleges annexed to its abbeys, two schools for singing, and a great number of primary schools.

XII. The Austrian Congregation of St. Joseph.

The monasteries of the Congregation of St. Joseph are also among the most ancient in Austria, and, with the exception of Innsbruck, all date before the eleventh century. The present Congregation, like that of the Immaculate Conception, was established by Leo XIII in 1889. It comprises seven monasteries: Fiecht and Marienberg in the Tyrol; Michaelbeuren near Salzburg; Lambach in Upper Austria; Raigern in Moravia; and St. Peter of Salzburg. The priory of Innsbruck (1894) is a branch of this last abbey, which was founded about 700, and is the mother-house of the Congregation. The priory maintains five houses established for the education of artisans and labourers: Innsbruck, Martinsbuckel, Volders, Wieting, and Mieming. At Scharnitz there is an educational establishment for girls, which is directed by Benedictine nuns.

The monks of the Congregation of St. Joseph devote themselves chiefly to parish work and to teaching, as do their Austrian brethren of the Immaculate Conception. Each abbey has a certain number of parishes, churches, and public oratories to administer. The abbeys of Salzburg and of Marienberg direct colleges; the abbeys of Fiecht, Lambach, the priories of Innsbruck, and Edmundsburg (the two last are dependencies of Salzburg abbey) have schools for boys.

To the abbey of St. Peter of Salzburg was given the signal honour of organising the university of Salzburg, which was opened in 1621, and continued until 1810.

By the creation of the priory of Innsbruck and its branches, the Congregation has opened up new and vast fields of action, in which the monks labour for the good of the people. There can be no doubt that the monks have rendered very great services by schools of agriculture, and by those in which typographers, printers, binders, and artisans of all kinds are trained.

XIII. The Hungarian Congregation.

This Congregation differs from all others in its constitution. It comprises the four abbeys of Zalavar (1019), Bakonybel (1037), Tihany (1055), and Dömölk (1252), branches of the arch-abbey of St. Martin in Pannonia. Six residences or educational establishments are attached to these old abbeys. The monks of the Congregation have charge of the establishments. Unlike those of other Benedictine Congregations, the Hungarian monks do not enter for one particular monastery, but for the Congregation in general. The arch-abbey of St. Martin was founded in 1001 by St. Stephen, the first king of Hungary, and like the other Hungarian abbeys has existed without a break as a Benedictine house since its foundation. The Hungarian Congregation is, in a way, affiliated to the Cassinese Congregation.

XIV. The Congregation of St. Ottilien for Foreign Missions.

This Congregation is of quite recent date. It was founded in 1885 at St. Ottilien in Bavaria with the special object of spreading the Catholic faith among pagan peoples, more particularly in German Africa. The mother-house of the Congregation is the abbey of St. Ottilien. The first abbot, Dom Norbert Weber, was consecrated February 1, 1903. The Congregation has three abbeys, Schweiklberg,

near Passau (1904), that of St. Felicitas at Münsterschwarzach, an ancient abbey restored in 1913, that of St. Benedict at Seoul in Corea, the priory of St. Ludwig, near Würzburg; three houses for scholastics, Passau, Munich and Dillingen near Augsburg; and it directs the monastery of Benedictine nuns of Putzing (Austria), who have missions in Africa and Brazil.

The field of action of the monks of St. Ottilien is the Apostolic Vicariate of Dar-es-Salaam and the Prefecture Apostolic of Lindi in East Africa. It comprises at present ten posts and missions. The first missionary bishop of this Congregation, Mgr. Cassian Spiss, together with two monks, two lay-brothers, and two nuns, suffered martyrdom at the hands of the natives in 1905. Mgr. Thomas Spreiter has succeeded the martyred bishop as second Vicar-Apostolic of Dar-es-Salaam.

The Congregation has founded an abbey in Corea, which has for its object the education of young Corean nobles.

XV. The Belgian Congregation.

This Congregation was erected under the title of the Annunciation by a brief of Pope Benedict XV, February 20, 1920. It comprises three abbeys: that of St. Benedict at Maredsous, Regina Cœli at Mont-César, Louvain, separated from the Beuron Congregation; that of St. Andrew of Zevenkerken, near Bruges, separated from the Brazilian Congregation.

After the Divine Office, the activity of the Belgian monks is divided between the ministry, secondary teaching, study, the teaching and propaganda of liturgical arts and sciences.

A college for the Humanities is annexed to the Abbey of St. Andrew, also to that of Maredsous, which has furthermore a school for arts and crafts.

Courses of Theology for the religious of the Congregation are given to the scholastics at the Abbey of Mont-César.

All three abbeys take a very active part in the liturgical movement, which has made such strides of late years by the publication of reviews and liturgical works.

His Holiness Pope Pius XI has entrusted to the Belgian Congregation the direction of the Greek college of St. Athanasius at Rome.

CHAPTER III

THE EXTERIOR ACTIVITY OF THE ORDER IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

The sons of St. Benedict perform precisely the same work in the twentieth century as they have always done in the Church. The reader has been able to gather this fact by the data given in the preceding historical notices. They maintain and spread the religious spirit in the Church, and this mission is as necessary in the present century as at any other period. The monks owe this spirit to the recital of the Divine Office, which has always been and still is their principal work. Of recent years they have imbued others with this spirit by the reform of the chant, begun and still carried on by them, and by restoring to its high place the liturgy of the Church. They have undertaken these reforms more especially since the second half of the last century, wherever they have settled down.

But in our own days, as well as in the past, the sons of St. Benedict have undertaken accessory works other than the Office. These may be grouped, as in the Middle Ages, under three chief headings: the apostolate and parish work; teaching and intellectual works; colonisation and agricultural works.

Let us take each of these groups separately, and give sufficient information concerning each to allow the reader to judge of the present activity of the Order.

1. The Apostolate and the Ministry.

(*a*) the apostolate.

The apostolate, properly so called, is undertaken by the Bavarian Congregation of St. Ottilien, which was founded with this special object. Besides a mission in Korea, it has houses in East Africa, a part of which country has been entrusted to it as an Apostolic Vicariate.

The two American Congregations, since the foundation of the big abbeys of St. Meinrad in Indiana and St. Vincent in Pennsylvania, have continued to spread the Gospel among the Indians of North America, where they have very numerous missions.

The congregation of Subiaco has also shown a special predilection for this renewal of the Benedictine apostolate among the peoples of the New World. The monks of the French province have missions in the Indian Territory of the United States and in the Argentine; those of the Belgian province have a mission in the Transvaal; whilst those of the Spanish province continue the admirable work begun by Dom Salvado among the Aborigines of Australia.

Of the affiliated orders, the Trappists, as we have already informed the reader when pointing out the marvellous development of this branch in the nineteenth century, have settled down in a number of missionary countries, in China, Japan, Algeria, the Congo, Natal, Canada, and the United States of America. The Sylvestrians have settled in Ceylon, where they have had the honour of seeing one of their monks chosen as Bishop of Kandy.

But the largest field of action offered to the Benedictine apostolate is undoubtedly in Brazil, where the monks have

undertaken the evangelisation of the immense diocese of Rio-Branco, and the conversion of the Indians of Rio-Pardo in the diocese of the Bishop of Bahia.

Again, when the Belgians annexed the Congo, the Benedictines of St. Andrew undertook a new mission in the Katanga, which was erected into an Apostolic Prefecture by a decree of April 6, 1910.

(*b*) THE MINISTRY.

Parish work is done in varying degrees and conditions by all Benedictine Congregations. Several Congregations, like those of Monte Cassino, Subiaco, Brazil and Hungary, have entire dioceses which are administered by one or several of their abbeys. Such is the case with Monte Cassino, La Cava, St. Paul, the abbey of St. Martin in Pannonia, and those of Rio and New Norcia. As a rule, the work is done in parishes which are dependencies of an abbey, and therefore the monks are continuously under the jurisdiction of their regular superiors. Sometimes the monks replace the secular clergy, and in these cases they are temporarily under the bishops who employ them, as regards the work done for the parish.

Among the Congregations who have devoted themselves especially to the ministry, the Austrian congregation of the Immaculate Conception, which has charge of 498,000 souls, is noteworthy. The following are also remarkable: Monte Cassino with 177,000 souls; the American Cassinese Congregation 166,000; the English Congregation 101,000; the Bavarian 86,000; that of St. Joseph (Austria) 75,000; that of Subiaco 106,000; the Swiss-American Congregation 58,000; the Hungarian 75,000; and that of Switzerland 30,000.

In order to form an accurate idea of the activity of the Order, it should not be forgotten that these figures repre-

sent outside work only. In a number of abbeys, which are in addition the resort of numerous pilgrims, as for instance Einsiedeln, Montserrat, Monte Vergine, Göttweig and Beuron, the work done in the abbey itself is of more importance than that done in the parishes which are dependencies thereof.[1]

The spiritual direction of religious communities forms also one of the usual branches of the work done by the Benedictines. Almost all the abbeys have numerous communities to direct, in which monks hear confessions, give retreats and spiritual conferences.

2. Teaching and Intellectual Work.

(*a*) teaching.

Teaching has always been, and is still, one of the usual channels into which the Benedictines have turned their activity.

In the Congregations in which teaching is given the highest place, as in that of Bavaria, the three Congregations of Austria-Hungary, those of the United States, England, and Switzerland, the professors almost all have University or legal degrees. The holders of these degrees place the schools in which they teach on a footing of perfect equality with the official establishments of instruction, and many of them are even acknowledged as such by Government. Several colleges and schools maintained by the monks in Austria and Bavaria have been recognised in this way.

Philosophy and theology are taught by the Benedictines to their own subjects in houses set apart for this purpose

[1] At Einsiedeln this ministry is so extensive that a special church had to be built wherein to hear the confessions. It contains twenty-nine confessionals, which, in the summer time, are continually besieged by pilgrims.

in each Congregation, or at the college of St. Anselm at Rome. Independently of these, the educational establishments for externs comprise seminaries, colleges for secondary education; abbatial or claustral schools in which the same instruction is given to a limited number of pupils or to oblates; schools of arts and crafts, schools of sacred music, primary schools, schools for the poor, and adult schools.

From this list the reader can see that the teaching given by the Benedictine Order embraces all classes and all degrees.

Seminaries properly so called exist only in the Cassinese Congregation. There is a seminary at Monte Cassino and another at La Cava. To these must be added the college of St. Athanasius at Rome, directed by the monks of the Congregation of Beuron for the training of priests of the Greek rite; and the College of St. Ephrem and St. Benedict in Jerusalem, directed by the monks of the French province of Subiaco for the training of priests of the Syrian rite.

Educational establishments conducted by the monks usually take the form of colleges, which colleges have in modern times contributed greatly to the esteem in which Benedictine teaching is held. In these establishments, under names which vary with the country, and with differences of detail into which we cannot enter, secondary education is given. The monks prepare the students for the Universities, special studies, the army, and the navy. According to the statistics of 1920 the biggest colleges are those belonging to the Congregations of the Immaculate Conception (Austria), Hungary, Bavaria, and the American Cassinese Congregation, each of which has on the rolls nearly 3,000 pupils.

There are numerous primary schools in the three Congregations of Austria-Hungary and in those of the United States. The abbey of Muri-Gries of the Swiss Congregation has, as we have already said, a normal school for the training of schoolmasters. The English Congregation has primary schools attached to nearly every one of the ninety or more missions under its jurisdiction.

Art Schools.—It will prove of interest to give some attention to art schools, because they are an innovation in monastic teaching. Art, it is true, was always practised in the cloister. It is so much a part of Benedictine life that St. Benedict has dedicated a whole chapter of his Rule "to those who exercise an art in the monastery."[1] But up to last century art had been pursued by individuals only. For instance, we do not hear of the formation of a school of painting in the monasteries, nor of technical courses of sacred music open to lay people,[2] any more than we hear of schools of arts and crafts. As far as these are concerned, the innovation is due to the Congregation of Beuron, which has thus traced a new line of action which seems to harmonise particularly well with monastic life, since it is foreseen by the Holy Rule. We shall give a short note of each of these schools and of similar institutions which may be met with in the other Congregations.

The School of Art at Beuron.—This is not a school in the pedagogic sense of the word, but an artistic group formed at Beuron by the union of some monks who wished to renew religious decorative art after a more Christian inspiration. The choir monks and the lay-brothers, who

[1] Chap. lvii.

[2] Except at Montserrat, where exists, since the fourteenth century, the famous Escolania, of which we will speak further on.

joined for this purpose in order to realise their ideal by a building in which the architecture and decoration were to be inspired by the same principles, constructed in the neighbourhood of the abbey a chapel, which was dedicated to St. Maur and decorated in the style which has been since called " the Beuron style."

Their undertaking was successful, for soon their aid was sought by outsiders. They have decorated a great number of churches and chapels in Germany, Switzerland, and Austria, and have latterly completed a work of years in the decoration in mosaic of the crypt of Monte Cassino.

The following is a list, in chronological order, of the principal works executed or undertaken by the Beuron School:[1] 1869, construction of the chapel of St. Maur near Beuron; 1870-71, the paintings in the chapel of St. Maur; 1872, the life of St. Benedict in the dormitory of Beuron; 1873, the restoration of the church of Beuron; 1874, that of the refectory; 1875, the paintings in the church of Messkirch; 1876, the paintings in the chapel of St. Conrad at Constance; 1877-80, the paintings in the "torretta" of Monte Cassino; 1880-85, the paintings in the church of Emaus at Prague; 1885, the chapel of Röckelwitz (Saxony); 1886, the chapel of the Sisters of Charity at Teplitz (Bohemia), the episcopal chapel of Seckau; 1888, the church of the seminary of Königgrätz (Bohemia); 1889, the chapel of the family Reinhard at Ehrenbreitstein; 1890, Via Crucis in the church of Our Lady at Stuttgart; 1891, the new refectory at Beuron; 1891-94, the paintings in the church at Irrendorf; the chapel of St. Martin and of the Pietà at Monte Cassino; 1895-97, the paintings in St. Gabriel at Prague; 1899, two parish churches; 1900, the works in

[1] We are indebted for it to the kindness of Dom Paul Krebs, one of the first co-operators in this movement, who for some years was occupied with the decoration of the abbey-church at Eibingen.

mosaic in the crypt of Monte Cassino; 1900-03, the chapel of Our Lady of Dolours at Beuron and two churches; the beginning of the works at Maria-Laach; 1904, the paintings in the parish church in Schwytz, two chapels; 1905, two chapels, church of the Franciscan nuns at Tübach (Switzerland); 1906-1907, parish church, convent of the Benedictine nuns at Kempen; 1907, the beginning of the decorative works in the chapel of St. Hildegard at Eibingen; 1908, chapel of the Convent of Heiligenbronn.

From 1869 onwards a great number of statues of Saints have been executed at Beuron, and for some years the monks have also become goldsmiths and they have made numerous church vessels.[1]

St. Joseph's School of Arts and Crafts (*Belgium*).—This school, annexed to the abbey of Maredsous, was founded in 1903. Its aim is social, artistic, and religious. The monks' first object is to make good Christians of the children entrusted to their care, and at the same time to train them up to be skilful workers capable of earning an honest living in the world. Again, the monks wish to start a reaction against the bad taste in religious objects which are executed not by Christian artists, but by tradespeople whose aim is material gain.

Only those children are admitted who are endowed with a real talent for drawing. A superior primary education is given as well as a sound religious training. Reproductions of the most perfect works of art achieved in the branch in which the pupils are to specialise are placed at their dis-

[1] For the art principles of the school of Beuron cf. *Zur Ästhetik der Beuroner Schule* by Dom Desiderius Lenz, Vienna, 1898; *Vom Wesen der hieratischen Kunst* by Dom Ansgar Pöllmann, Beuron, 1905; and an article in the *Revue de l'art*, published June, 1908, by Dom Odilo Wolff.

posal. A return is made to methods which take more time, and more care of the kind given by the workers of the Middle Ages is demanded. The sentiment of the dignity of the art which the pupils are called upon to practise is infused into them by the monks. As a consequence of these methods, the school at St. Joseph's has been organised with success. It has not yet reached its highest development, as the crafts taught comprise up to the present only goldsmith's work, enamel, embroidery, stone and wood carving. However, as a result of the excellent principles followed in the school and the intelligent way in which the work was begun, St. Joseph's will undoubtedly raise the standard of the arts and crafts employed in church work.

The School of Sacred Music at Beuron or "Gregorius-Haus" was founded by the abbey in 1907 with the object of training organists and choir-masters who possess the theoretical and practical knowledge required for the execution of sacred music, according to the desire expressed by His Holiness Pius X in his *Motu Proprio* on Plainchant. The course of instruction begins on October 1, and lasts eight months. It comprises two divisions, which correspond to the previous training and to the aims of the students. The lower standard trains those intending to become organists in country churches, who must be well acquainted with the ordinary of the daily Office. The higher course is for the training of those who wish to be thoroughly grounded in theory and well practised in conducting and executing the Gregorian and the finest polyphonic chant.

Lectures or private lessons are given according to the subjects. Lessons on the organ, the piano and other instruments are given individually. Lectures are delivered in common on liturgy, harmony, counterpoint, the accom-

paniment of plainsong, the study of neums, the Gregorian vocal chant, the structure of the organ, and the history of music.

The students are present at the conventual sung Mass, and at Vespers on feast-days. The pieces unknown to them, which are to be met with in the Offices, are explained to them beforehand. The students have at their disposal three organs, fourteen pianos, and a library specially formed of works devoted to the subjects they are studying.

The Escolanía of Montserrat.—The celebrated school of music annexed to the national sanctuary of Spain forms the only notable exception to what we have previously said of innovation in the matter of artistic teaching. It has a glorious past, for it dates from the fourteenth century, and has trained without interruption musicians and organists of repute. The primary and very Benedictine object of the Escolanía was to enhance divine worship and the services in the Basilica by a *Schola* of well-trained and practised children. The secondary object was to train good Christians, and to put them in the way of earning an honest livelihood by helping them to become *virtuosi*, organists, or accomplished choirmasters.

With these objects in view children from eight years old are received without fee at the Escolanía, and are kept until the age of sixteen. The instruction given corresponds, from the educational point of view, to that of the French Little Seminaries, and comprises in addition full courses in instrumental and vocal music, such as are given in the *conservatoires*. The majority of the organists and conductors in Spain, as well as numbers of famous *virtuosi*, are former pupils of the Escolanía.

Since the publication of the *Motu Proprio*, to comply with the wishes of the Holy Father, more attention has

been given to the study and teaching of the Gregorian chant, though the study of polyphonic religious music still holds a high place.

Schools of Trades and Charitable Institutions.—We are devoting a special paragraph to these institutions, as they form with the art schools a new and interesting phase of Benedictine activity. As for the charitable institutions entrusted to the monks and nuns, they have always been numerous at every period of the monastic Order. The innovation lies in the more highly organised and specialised form these institutions have assumed in the last few years. To mention only those works which have this modern character, we call the reader's attention to the evening schools for adults, opened by the Benedictines of Brazil, at Rio, Tijuca, St. Paul, in which especially the newsvendors of the town are taught. In the houses of Ottobeuren and Andechs the monks of the Bavarian Congregation devote themselves to the education of poor children, and direct a reformatory for boys at Rothenfeld. The oblates of St. Benedict at Héverlé near Louvain, whose rule of life has been very wisely formed by constitutions which may serve as a model of their kind for semi-active, semi-contemplative life, direct a large orphanage, composed for the most part of foundlings or children entrusted to their care by the communes.

However, the most interesting group of establishments of this kind are those of the priory of Innsbruck, a dependency of the abbey of Salzburg. It comprises at present six houses, in which the fathers and lay-brothers devote themselves to the education of deserted children and to the training of artisans: typographers, printers, binders, tailors, shoemakers, joiners, locksmiths, labourers, and gardeners.

(*b*) INTELLECTUAL WORKS.

It suffices to mention the names of Gregory the Great, St. Bede, Alcuin, Lanfranc, and St. Anselm, and nearer our own times, of Mabillon, Montfaucon, Guéranger, Gasquet and Pitra, to make the reader realise how dear intellectual work has been to the Benedictines at all times. He must not deduce from these names, as many seem to do nowadays, that intellectual work is the natural or even necessary occupation of Benedictine life. If at certain times, when the monks were prevented from exercising works outside their monasteries, they seemed to have a special predilection for intellectual works, the reader has been able to see in the foregoing chapters that, wherever entire liberty has been granted, the monks have still interested themselves in intellectual works, but without excluding other forms of activity. The conventional type of Benedictine whose life is made up of study and reciting the Office is not false to the facts, since monks are often to be found who have reached a high degree of sanctity by leading this kind of life; but it must be observed that such men are the exception, and the normal and traditional type is that of the monk *paratus ad omnia*, described by Mgr. Freppel as "a man of God and of the Church," ready to serve the Church in all her needs.

It is not to be denied that at certain times intellectual and scientific activity was more esteemed than at others. Such was the case in the seventeenth century, and such is the case in our own times; but the reader who has perused the information I have given on apostolate, ministry and teaching, will be in a position to realise that these intellectual works are by no means the exclusive or even chief occupation of the Benedictines of to-day.

Now that we have justified the above remark by the

care we have taken throughout this work to give an accurate and precise idea of Benedictine life, we may continue by giving a brief outline of the intellectual summits attained by our Order since the re-establishment of the modern Congregations. It must be understood that our present aim is to give only a general idea, and that we can quote only a few of the names and works which have earned an incontestable fame.[1] The mere naming of the works is nevertheless such a task that they must be divided according to subject-matter, and we place in the first rank those works to which the monks have devoted themselves in an especial manner.

First of all come works on the liturgy. The liturgy is in a certain sense a monopoly of the Benedictines, who have never proved their right to this monopoly more brilliantly than in their works on this subject published in the last century. In the first rank we must place *Les Institutions liturgiques* and *L'Année liturgique* of Dom Guéranger. The illustrious abbot of Solesmes by his *Institutions* restored liturgical unity in France, and this achievement was formally recognised by Pius IX.[2] What he did for the clergy he extended to the public by initiating in his *Année liturgique* a return to the official prayer of the Church. Dom Guéranger's works on the liturgy have been continued and completed by the historical monographs published by the present abbot of Farnborough, Dom Cabrol, in his fine book entitled *La Prière antique;*[3] and in another branch by Dom Pothier, who has succeeded in bringing back the

[1] Not one, but a whole series of volumes would be necessary to give a complete bibliography of the works of the Benedictines in the last century. For the Congregation of France alone, see *Bibliographie des Bénédictins de la Congrégation de France*, vol. i, Paris, 1906, Champion.

[2] In his Brief of March 19, 1875.

[3] *Liturgical Prayer* is the English translation of this work.

faithful to the understanding of plainsong, just as Dom Guéranger made them return to the understanding of the Liturgy.

The work of Dom Guéranger and Dom Pothier has been carried on and spread abroad in Germany by Dom Bäumer in his *History of the Breviary*, and in the books on the Gregorian chant by Dom Sauter, Dom Kienle, Dom Raphael Molitor, and Dom Dominicus Johner. The work is still continued at Solesmes by Dom Mocquereau, the learned director of the *Musical Paleography*, and by Dom Quentin, the author of a remarkable study on Martyrologies.

In the domain of Patrology and Christian Archæology, we must again give the palm to a monk of Solesmes, Dom Pitra, an indefatigable worker, endowed with an iron constitution, which enabled him to pass a night without sleep, when his work was urgent, and to be content in ordinary times with three or four hours' rest. This monk was well versed in all humanistic sciences, and carried on at first the tradition of the monks of St. Maur by directing the gigantic undertaking of the Greek and Latin Patrologies of Migne. He then gave up the greater part of his time to seeking out and editing unpublished works of Greek and Latin authors of ecclesiastical antiquity. He has published the *Spicilegium Solesmense*, the *Analecta Sacra*, the *Juris ecclesiastici Græcorum Historia et Monumenta*, and the *Analecta Novissima*. Dom Pitra was made a cardinal in recognition of the services rendered to the Church by his publications, just when Pius IX was devoting his energies to the union of the Greek and Latin Churches. The learned humanist is known also by his works on Symbolism and the religious poetry of the Greeks, and by his Lives of St. Leodegar and Father Libermann.

Second only to Dom Pitra in the study of Patrology and Christian Archæology is Dom Germain Morin, a monk

of Maredsous. Specially noteworthy are the following works: three volumes of *Anecdota Maredsolana*, containing the hitherto unpublished Homilies and Commentaries of St. Jerome; the *Liber Comicus*, with the Lectionary of Toledo; and a series of learned works published in the *Revue Bénédictine*, among which we must mention the studies on the author of the *Te Deum*, and that on *St. Cesarius of Arles*, an edition of whose work Father Morin is preparing for the *Corpus Scriptorum ecclesiasticorum latinorum*, published by the Academy of Vienna.

In England we must point out the late abbot of Downside, Dom Butler, who enjoys a reputation in scientific circles for his *Lausiac History of Palladius*, and his *Benedictine Monachism*, and Dom Chapman, also of Downside, for his *Notes on the Early History of the Vulgate Gospels*.

The historical works of contemporary Benedictines are not less important. In England Cardinal Gasquet has gained fame by his work on *Henry VIII and the English Monasteries*, a publication which shed light on a point of history hitherto obscure, and contributed greatly to a revival of public sympathy with regard to Catholicism and the religious Orders. Dom Bede Camm has served in the same cause by becoming the historian of the English martyrs of the time of Henry VIII and Elizabeth.

Two monks, Dom Ursmer Berlière of Maredsous and Dom Besse of Ligugé, have dedicated their lives to monastic history. Dom Berlière, besides very numerous works on the Congregations, General Chapters, Benedictine Abbeys, and Monastic Customs, the most important of which have been collected in the *Mélanges d'Histoire Bénédictine*, has gained fame by his *Monasticon Belge*.[1] During the years

[1] Accounts of two provinces have appeared up to the present, that of Namur and Hainault (1890-1897).

he spent in Rome as director of the *Institut Historique Belge*, he added to his reputation by the *Analecta Vaticano-Belgica*.

Dom Besse, the founder and editor of the *Revue Mabillon*, has traced the brilliant history of Oriental monachism in *Les Moines d'Orient avant le concile de Chalcédoine*. Besides numerous articles which appeared in the *Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique*, the *Revue Bénédictine* and the *Bulletin de Saint Martin*, he has given an interesting picture of monastic life in our own time in *Le Moine Bénédictin*.[1] In the collection *Les Saints*, Dom Besse has contributed a life of *St. Wandrille*, and in the collection *Science et Religion* three pamphlets: *D'où viennent les moines? Les Bénédictins de France*, and *Les Saints Protecteurs du travail*.

We must mention, too, among the indefatigable workers of the Congregation of France, Dom Leclercq, the author of the *Manuel d'Archéologie Chrétienne*, *L'Afrique Chrétienne et l'Espagne Chrétienne*, and of a collection of authentic writings on the martyrs from the origin of Christianity to our own day.

Many monks of the same Congregation have specialised in the study of documents concerning certain provinces in France. In this connection must be mentioned Dom Piolin, Dom Chamard, Dom Plaine and Dom Bérengier, who have shed fresh light on the history of Maine, Anjou, Brittany and Provence.

[1] In this publication Dom Besse gives information concerning the daily life in the abbeys, the Rule, the abbot, the monastery itself, prayer, studies, and the rôle played by the Benedictines in modern society. Our work is not a duplicate of his, nor does it reproduce the poetic and charming picture of the Beuron life described by Dom Sebastian van Oer in *Ein Tag im Kloster*. The point of view and purpose of this work, as of the publications previously devoted to Benedictine life (cf. *Bibliogr.* 11, n. 1), are quite different.

Dom Ringholz, Dom Dudik, and Dom Keiblinger are specially noteworthy among the German Benedictines for their remarkable histories of the abbeys of Einsiedeln, Raigern, and Melk.

Mention must also be made of the *Hagiographischer Jahresbericht*, which was begun by Dom Helmling, and is at present published at Beuron by Dom Bihlmeyer, and of the biographies of the most eminent contemporaries of the Order, especially the following: biography of Dom Pitra, by Dom Cabrol;[1] of Archbishop Ullathorne[2] (an autobiography); of Dom Guéranger, by Dom Delatte;[3] of Dom Boniface Wimmer, by Bernard Lesker;[4] of Dom Marty, by Mgr. Henni;[5] of Dom Maur and of Dom Placid Wolter, by Mgr. Van Caloen and Dom Van Oer;[6] and of Dom Salvado, by Dom Bérengier.[7]

In the domain of Theology, we must first mention the *Summa Theologica ad modum commentarii in Aquinatis Summam præsentis ævi studiis aptatam* of Dom Lawrence Janssens, who for several years was rector and professor of dogma at St. Anselm in Rome. Dom Delatte, who was also a professor of dogma before being elected abbot of Solesmes and third Superior-General of the Congregation of France, has published a treatise, *De Deo Uno*, with an introduction to general theology, and another, *De Deo Trino*. We must point out, besides the *Nouvelle Théologie dogmatique* of Dom Souben, the dissertations of the

[1] *Histoire du Cardinal Pitra*, Paris, 1893, Relaux.

[2] *Autobiography of Archbishop Ullathorne*, London, Burns and Oates.

[3] *Dom Guéranger, Abbé de Solesmes*, Paris, 1910, Plon et Oudin.

[4] *Erzabt Bonifaz Wimmer*, Frankfurter zeitgem. Broschüren, 1891.

[5] *Bishop Marty*, New York, 1888.

[6] *Dom Maur Wolter*, Bruges, 1891, Desclée. *Erzabt Plazidus Wolter*, Freiburg, 1900, Herder.

[7] *La Nouvelle Nursie. Hist. d'une colonie bénéd. en Australie*, Paris, 1878, Lecoffre.

abbot of Glanfeuil, Dom Renaudin, concerning *La Définibilité de l'Assomption de la Sainte-Vierge*, and the remarkable treatise of Dom Odilo Rottmanner, a monk of Munich, on *Augustinism*. Among the German Benedictines, Dom Boniface Haneberg, first a monk of the Bavarian Congregation then Bishop of Spires, has distinguished himself as a master of exegesis in his *Geschichte der biblischen Offenbarung* and his Commentary on St. John. In the domain of Ethics we must draw attention to a dissertation on *Probabilism*, by Dom Mayeul de Caigny, now Abbot of Bahia; and in the domain of Canon Law the highly esteemed *Directoire canonique à l'usage des congrégations à vœux simples*, by Dom Pierre Bastien.

Art and Literature.—We have already given an account of the part played by the Order in the artistic movement of the last century. The theories of the Beuron school have been expounded and defended in articles and books by one of the founders, Dom Desiderius Lenz, by Dom Ansgar Pöllmann of Beuron and Dom Odilo Wolff of Prague.

Dom Ansgar Pöllmann founded at Beuron the publication of *Gottesminne*, a literary and religious review. He has also published two volumes of verse entitled *Sonnenschein* and *Kleine Lieder*. Dom Timotheus Kranich of the same abbey is the author of two more collections of verse: *Schlichte Spende* and *Goldne Fernen*, and in the domain of religious verse we must also mention the poems in Czech of Dom Bouska, and *The Bells of Atchison*, a collection of verse published in 1908 by Dom Edward Green, a monk of Atchison.

In the departments of History, of Art, and Æsthetics, Dom Albert Kuhn of the abbey of Einsiedeln has published a *General History of Art*, which was recommended by

Leo XIII,[1] and Dom Souben of the Congregation of France has produced a book entitled *Esthétique du Dogme chrétien;* also an *Essai sur les manifestations du Beau dans la nature.*

In the domain of Science, the Benedictines have devoted themselves chiefly to astronomy, mathematics, physics and natural history.

The monks of the Congregations of Austria, Bavaria, Switzerland, and Italy have published numerous works on these subjects. We need only recall the names of Mgr. Netzhammer, Archbishop of Bucharest, Dom Kramer, Mgr. Barbieri, and the celebrated ornithologists of St. Lambrecht, to wit Dom Schaffer and Dom Hanf. We recall, too, the remarkable discoveries of the directors of the observatory of Kremsmünster, Dom Reslhuber and Dom Schwab; of the present director of the meteorological observatory of Monte Cassino, Dom Paolini, and the equally highly appreciated discoveries of Dom Mayeul Lamey; who established at Grignon, in 1877, an observatory and a monastery specially dedicated to scientific research.[2]

We shall conclude by giving a short account of Benedictine spirituality, and of the publications which have diffused the traditional teaching on it in the last few years. First of all mention must be made of the *Retreat* of Mgr. Hedley, a monk of Belmont and Bishop of Newport, because of its success, which was justified by the solidity and simplicity of the author's doctrine. We must also draw attention to his books on the Eucharist, and on *The Relations of a Bishop with his Flock,* this latter in English only.

In France there is a remarkable treatise entitled *La vie spirituelle et l'oraison, d'après la Sainte Ecriture et la*

[1] *Allgemeine Kunstgeschichte,* Einsiedeln, 1891-1909, Benziger.
[2] On *Dom Mayeul Lamey* cf. notice by Ingold, Colmar, 1907.

tradition monastique, by the abbess of St. Cecile of Solesmes,[1] and Dom Guéranger has translated the Exercises of St. Gertrude, and Dom Paquelin the works of St. Mechtild and St. Gertrude. And here mention must be made of Abbot Marmion's *Christ, the Life of the Soul*, which was welcomed with an enthusiasm seldom accorded to a spiritual work.

In Germany, various works have been produced on the elements of monastic and religious life: the *Elementa vitæ monasticæ*, by Dom Maur Wolter, the *Kolloquien über die heilige Regel*, by Dom Sauter, and the *Klösterliche Tagesordnung*, now a classic, by Dom Ludger Leonard. By Dom Wolter also is an admirable Commentary on the Psalms, entitled *Psallite sapienter*.

Collective Works.—Collective works have always been among Benedictine pursuits from the Middle Ages, when chronicles and annals were carried on by several generations of monks, each generation continuing the work of that immediately preceding. The Maurists carried on this tradition in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in their editions of the Fathers and the monks of Salzburg in their courses on theology. The same has been done for the Liturgy by the Benedictines of France and those of Beuron in a series of works which were begun in the last century and are being continued in the present day. As regards this series, there is not, it is true, such an obvious collaboration as formerly of all the monks belonging to the same abbey; but the work begun by Dom Guéranger is essentially one, and forms a kind of *Summa Liturgica*, each part of which is composed with the object of making the Roman liturgy known, loved, received and adopted everywhere.

[1] English ed., *Spiritual Life and Prayer* (Burns Oates and Washbourne, London).

An abbey of the Congregation of France, that of Farnborough, seems to be especially organised with a view to the production of collective works. It publishes under the direction of the Abbot Dom Cabrol the *Dictionnaire archéologique*, and, under the direction of Dom Leclercq, a collection of the acts of the martyrs has been recently produced.

His Holiness Pius X, taking into account the speed with which such work is done, and the unity of the editing, showed in a striking way his esteem for the services rendered by a group of learned collaborators of the same Order, all working for the same object and desiring the same end. He had already entrusted to the monks of Solesmes the production of the official edition of plainsong, and had made several Benedictines members of the commission formed to undertake the revision of Canon Law. In 1908 he crowned these marks of his esteem by entrusting to the Order of St. Benedict the delicate mission of revising the Vulgate. This work is being carried out at Rome by a committee, the president of which is Cardinal Gasquet.

Periodicals.—Periodicals may be divided into two groups: scientific reviews and popular reviews. Among the former we must mention first the *Revue Bénédictine*, published at the abbey of Maredsous, and the *Downside Review*, and these reviews are highly esteemed in learned circles. They contain articles on points of erudition connected with the liturgy, patrology, Christian archæology, theology, ecclesiastical history of the Middle Ages, and monastic history. We must also mention *Studien und Mitteilungen aus dem Benediktinerorden und seiner Zweige*, edited by the learned archivist of Raigern, Dom Maur Kinter, which is published in Salzburg; the *Revue Mabillon*, founded in 1905 by Dom Besse, which devotes articles to the archives of monastic France; the *Paléographie musicale*,

published at Solesmes, which produces and comments on plainsong manuscripts; the *Rivista Storica Benedettina*, published at Rome by the Olivetans, the *Ampleforth Journal* and the *Douay Magazine*.

The popular journals are far too numerous to be mentioned here. They have each a common aim: that of diffusing in the world a grasp of and love for the Liturgy. Nearly all of them have a literary and an historical section. We may call attention to the following, which are typical: the *Messager de St. Benoît* (Maredsous); the *Bulletin de St. Martin* (Ligugé); the *Maria Groet* (Afflighem); *The Benedictine Parish Monthly* of Atchison (Kansas).

The pamphlet with the largest circulation was undoubtedly the *Bonifatius-Blatt*, which printed before the war 900,000, and sometimes 1,000,000, copies. This review was largely apologetic, and it contributed to check the Protestant attack in the *Los von Rom*. It was distributed free in all the churches of Austria on the first Sunday of the month, and appeared simultaneously in German, Polish, Czech, and Slav. The abbey of Emaus published also the *Bonifatius-Korrespondenz* (fortnightly), which had the same character, but was specially written for the clergy and educated lay people. This fortnightly, which contained authenticated and well-written articles, was of the greatest service in Austria to those who strove to defend their faith and religion.

Among the popular reviews devoted exclusively to the Liturgy, we must draw attention to *La Vie Liturgique*, on account of its large circulation. This review was founded in 1909 at Mont-César, to carry out a resolution of the congress of Mechlin to spread in the vernacular the liturgical texts of Holy Mass and Sunday Vespers as much as possible among the people. The whole Liturgy for each Sunday (Mass and Vespers) is given for the six dioceses of

Belgium and the five dioceses of Holland in two editions for the bilingual dioceses.

The abbey of Mont-César and that of Afflighem produce also, in French and Flemish respectively, *Liturgical Questions*, two reviews which give fuller liturgical notes for the use of the clergy and religious communities.

3. Colonisation and Agricultural Works.

"One can assert," said Montalembert, after he had mentioned all that the Benedictines have done for science, letters and art, "that the monks have done more for agriculture than for any other science, and that no one has done as much as they have for the land. Since the beginning of the world, no class of men has devoted more persevering and more fruitful efforts to tilling the land. Everywhere they settled down, from the Straits of Gibraltar to the Gulf of Bothnia, and from the extreme limits of Scotland to the mouths of the Danube they were the first to give or render fruitfulness to the soil."[1] In all their foundations they set to work to reclaim woods, to drain marshy land, to fertilise sandy soil, to plant pollards by the sea. At every epoch of Benedictine history the monasteries have been, as we should style them to-day, types of "agricultural colonies," which teach the neighbouring landowners the art of making the soil fruitful.

With the exception of a few abbeys established by the necessities of the ministry and of education in the towns, almost all modern Benedictine abbeys remain faithful to this traditional love of the land and agricultural labours. They are frequently surrounded by a belt of fields and cultivated land, and as a rule model farms are attached to the abbeys. Such is the case in the majority of the abbeys of Austria, Germany, and the United States.

[1] *The Monks of the West*, vi, 206.

The Congregations of Bavaria and Subiaco and the Austrian congregation of St. Joseph have, moreover, schools of agriculture: that of St. Joseph has such schools in the houses which are dependencies of the priory of Innsbruck; that of Bavaria at Plankstetten and Weltenburg; the Congregation of Subiaco, which used to conduct a school of higher agriculture and a model farm in the French Pyrenees before the French persecutions, has at present an agricultural school at Niño Dios in the Argentine: at Daila, a dependency of the abbey of Praglia, in an unhealthy region ravaged by marsh fevers, this Congregation had helped to make the country more healthy by introducing improved agricultural methods.

The work of making the land salubrious and fertile has been achieved especially by the Trappists, who follow the Rule of St. Benedict literally, and therefore devote more time to manual labour.

In all the Trappist foundations from the second half of the nineteenth century they have had to renew the prodigies of endurance of the monks of the Middle Ages, and in almost all cases, too, they have succeeded in triumphing over the poverty of the soil and the unhealthiness of the climate.

To give only the most characteristic examples, the reader's attention may be drawn to the achievements of the monks in the following places: in France, in the unhealthy and desolate region of the Dombes, where they have reclaimed more than a thousand hectares of submerged land; at Achel and Westmael in the sand and heaths of the Campine; at the Tre Fontane, in a region ravaged by the fevers of the Roman Campagna and transformed by them into a smiling oasis. They have carried out the same work by dint of untiring and persevering energy in Syria, at Akbès near Alexandretta, and on the stony soil

of Palestine, at El-Akram near Jaffa; in the confines of the desert, at Staoueli in Algeria; near Pekin in China; in Japan, in the diocese of Hakodaté; and in Brazil in the State of St. Paul, where, in a few years, they have transformed 5,000 hectares of uncultivated land into luxuriant and prosperous coffee plantations.

In all these countries the Trappists have not been content with giving its place of honour to the old monastic adage *Ora et labora* by the cheering example of their lives and the marvellous results of their works, but, faithful to the charity traditional in the Order of St. Benedict, they have built, almost all at their own expense, schools, dispensaries, and hospices for the people who live near their abbeys.

BENEDICTINE NUNS

We have said nothing of Benedictine nuns in our historical summary, because for the most part their lives are purely contemplative; and consequently we had only to salute in passing, at every period of monastic history, the numberless saints they have given to the Church. They have existed since St. Benedict's time, as is proved by the charming account of St. Gregory the Great, who relates the annual visit of St. Scholastica to the Patriarch of Monte Cassino, and the death of this holy nun.

We have spoken of the aid given by Lioba and the Anglo-Saxon nuns to St. Boniface in the evangelisation and civilisation of Germany. In *The Monks of the West*[1] the reader can see what a number of holy Benedictine nuns were to be found in the Middle Ages in the cloisters of England, France and Germany. The renown of all these, however, is surpassed by St. Hildegard, St. Mechtild and St. Gertrude, who are known all over the world by their

[1] Montalembert, *The Monks of the West*, vols. iv and v.

revelations and the supernatural light shed on spiritual subjects by their writings.

With the renascence of the monastic Order, the number of Benedictine nuns has increased in our own day to an extraordinary degree. Dom Boniface Wimmer first introduced them into Pennsylvania in 1852, and at the present moment they number more than 3,000 in the United States, and their educational establishments for girls, as well as their numerous schools, are among the most renowned.

In the abbeys in which the life is purely contemplative, and in which consequently the Office is generally recited with great perfection, an important place is given to manual work. This consists as a rule in embroideries, the painting of miniatures, illuminations and other works for church purposes. In this way the entire lives of the nuns are directed towards God.[1]

Lastly, oblates of St. Benedict have successfully grafted active on to contemplative life, and we hope to see their example followed. Such has been the case with the Servants of the Poor, founded at Angers by Dom Leduc, and with the Sisters of Mercy, who conduct orphanages at Héverlé and Wyneghem, and have happily conceived the idea, already carried out elsewhere by the monks, of placing charitable institutions on the modern plan under the protection of St. Benedict and his Rule.

[1] As examples of the most remarkable productions of the last few years we mention the following: the Missal executed in 1904 by the nuns of Solesmes, which was used by His Holiness Pius X at the solemn Mass for the Jubilee of St. Gregory the Great; the embroideries worked according to the designs of the Beuron school by the nuns of Prague, specially trained in this art by Dom Desiderius Lenz; the miniatures exhibited in 1904 by the Benedictines of Dourgnes at the " Exhibition Mariale " at the Vatican; lastly, the famous Pastoral Letter of Cardinal Mercier, illuminated and decorated with miniatures by the nuns of St. Scholastica of Maredret.

CONCLUSION

The reader has been able to see by this summary of the state and activity of the Order of St. Benedict in our own day how, in spite of recent persecution, it lives and thrives, engaged in the most varied works of Christian life, and how its sphere of action has been enlarged and developed at the present time.

Its influence on contemporary society proves once again the wonderful adaptability of the Rule of St. Benedict, and the power it exercised and still exercises "of forming in all latitudes and in all grades of society perfect Christians."[1]

Besides, why should its influence be less now than it was in the past? Undoubtedly, circumstances of time and place have changed, but the goal to be achieved remains the same. And as our Lord said when contemplating the harvest and the fewness of the labourers, we too can repeat to-day: *Messis quidem multa, operarii autem pauci. Rogate ergo dominum messis, ut mittat operarios in vineam suam.*[2]

We still need, above all, men of prayer and desires, who will ask the Father of the family—on whom everything depends—to send labourers into His vineyard. And this is what those monks do who live a purely contemplative life within their monasteries.

In addition, there is need for workers to labour among all those peoples who have only lately come in contact with civilisation, and to whom the Gospel must be preached. And as the sons of St. Benedict succeeded in the past, so they seem assured of the same success in the future, by virtue of their method of apostolate, which protects the

[1] Mgr. Freppel, *Discours sur l'ordre monastique.*
[2] Matth. ix. 37-38.

works undertaken outside the cloister by the recital of the Divine Office in common in the monastery, and by the conventual life to which the missionaries return at stated intervals in order to acquire fresh vigour.

The harvesters must also continue their work in the field in which they have already laboured so long, to wit, in this old continent of Europe, where bad grain has been sown far and wide. Who are better fitted for carrying on this work than the sons of those who for centuries were almost the only ones to attempt it ?

We entertain, then, firm confidence in the consoling thought that with the present century an era of prosperity and development has begun for the Church and monachism. In the Middle Ages these two institutions, in spite of the power they held, were only too often at the mercy of princes and kings, because the Church and the religious life existed only in the limited region of Western Europe.

In our day the Church is, thanks be to God, almost everywhere free and independent. The persecutions, which aimed at her annihilation, resulted, in our time as in the past, in freedom, strength, and new life. And if we must deplore and denounce the odious spoliations which the Papacy has been forced to suffer in the nineteenth century, we must admit also that in spite of this scandalous dispossession the prestige of the Holy See has never been so great and so extensive as under the four great Popes who have succeeded one another in recent times.

Again, the Church, taken as a whole, has rarely been as sound as it is at present. It must be admitted that the piety of the Latin peoples is growing cold, and that these races in the mass are becoming more and more corrupt. By way of compensation their influence, by a manifest chastisement on the part of Providence, is daily becoming less in proportion to their lack of Christianity; whilst that

of the Northern races, who are becoming more Catholic, is increasing. On the other hand, too, piety, on the wane among the Latin peoples, has never been in other nations as enlightened as it is at present. Above all, since the beneficent decrees on daily Communion and the Communion of children, it has never drawn so eagerly and so copiously from the life-giving and supernatural fountains of the sacraments.

We believe that the Church of the present century is entering upon a new phase of progress in spite of the persecution which it always has to suffer, and which really play a necessary part in its existence and sanctification. Our reasons for this belief in the triumphal march of the Church lie in its diffusion, which is increasing daily, its independence with regard to the majority of the States and Governments of the present century, its moral purity, its intellectual activity, and its renewal of the interior life. If it is true that the Benedictine Order is but the Church in miniature—the heart of the Church, as it were—then we may hold that the twentieth century revival, of which we have given an account, will become more marked, and that the Order is destined to exercise once again, in totally different circumstances, the tremendous social influence it has exercised since its foundation, wherever liberty has been accorded to it.